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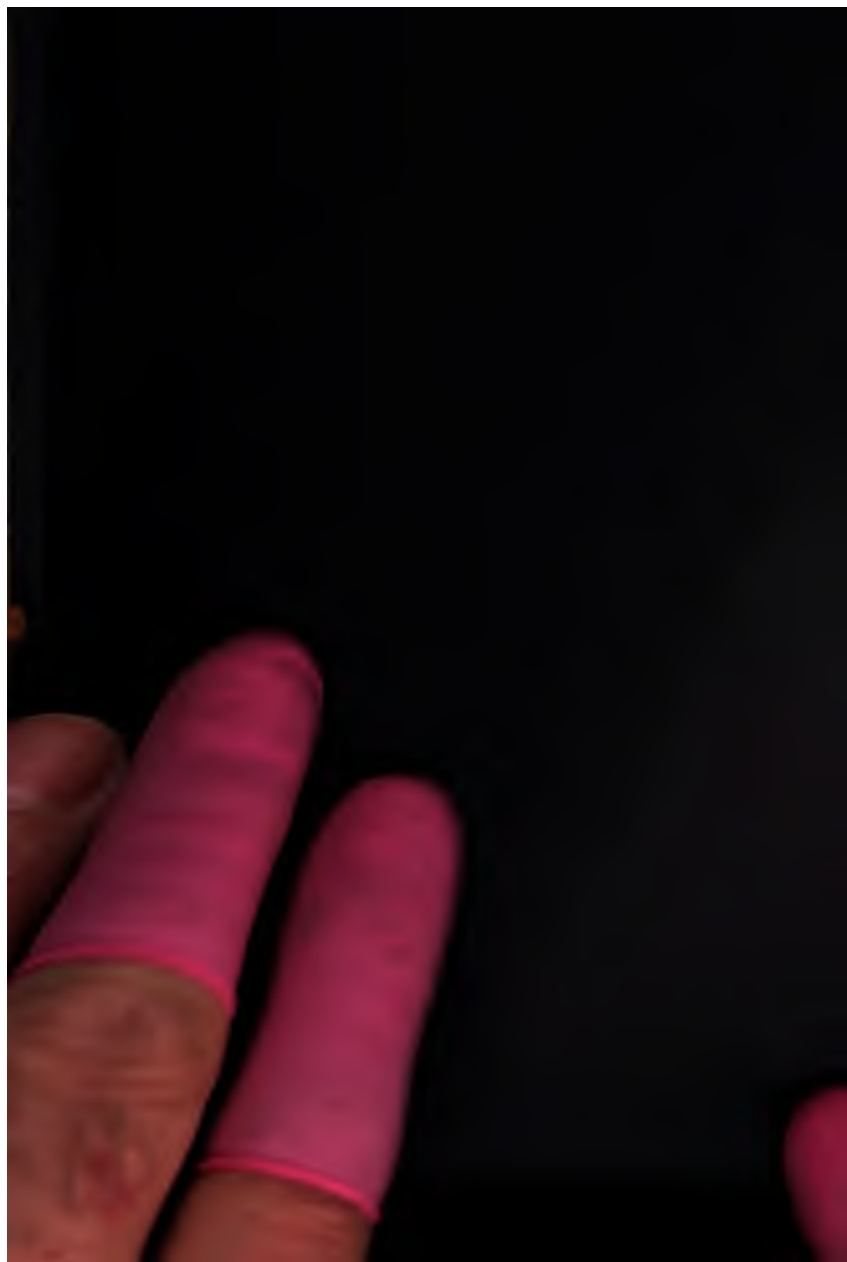
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HOLLAND AND HER HEROES.

Holland and Her Heroes

TO THE YEAR 1585.

BEING AN ADAPTATION OF MOTLEY'S
"RISE OF THE DUTCH REPUBLIC."

BY

MARY ALBERT.



LONDON:

C. KEGAN PAUL & Co., 1 PATERNOSTER SQUARE.

1878.

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PREFACE.

THIS inspiring and instructive fragment of history is offered in a form abridged from Mr Motley's 'Rise of the Dutch Republic,' in the hope that it may thus be the earlier brought to the knowledge of young students, and lead them on—when school days are over—to the study of the original work, to which alone any interest in the following pages is due.

The descendants of those who wrested Magna Charta from a tyrant King can never be indifferent to the many instances of noble self-devotion presented in the struggles and successes of a resolute and freedom-loving people.

LONDON, *February* 1878.



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HOLLAND AND HER HEROES

TO THE YEAR 1585.

CHAPTER I.

EARLIEST TIMES—THE ROMAN DOMINION.

I WANT my readers to imagine a country made up of wild morasses, oozy islands, vast belts of woodland, and tracts of sand—of a spongy soil, rendering the land almost uninhabitable—the whole region being girt with forests; much of it below the level of the ocean; subject also to the overflow of three great rivers, as well as constant inundations from the stormy sea.

Could it be expected that the inhabitants of such a region, having to battle with so many natural difficulties, should rise to any great height in the history of civilization? Yet we find them to-day ranking among the most civilised of nations, and their territory, small and barren as it once was, is now the richest country, after England, in the continent of Europe—rich enough to be able to lend to mighty empires.

To have risen to this height out of such unfavourable surroundings, this people, whose noble history I would condense for you, must have been great in heart and deed. And they are great; not only because they have changed

the marshy ground and desert tracts into a smiling, productive home of civilization ;—strong—not alone because they have forced back the mighty ocean, and converted the rivers into highways of commerce,—but because they have done glorious deeds, warred long and heroically against oppression—fought well for freedom.

Peace now dwells in the land so often reddened with blood, and torn with battle and slaughter,—the peace, the honour, and prosperity won by years of heroic combat against evil.

We do not know who were the original inhabitants of Holland. The first record we have of them does not reach beyond the time of Julius Cæsar. He found them savages, but courageous savages. The heart of the country was then inhabited by a Gallic race, but the frontiers by Teutonic tribes.

About a century before the Christian era, a vast inundation swept over the Rhine island of Batavia, and made it so desolate that the inhabitants deserted it in a body. Some exiles from among a German race (the Chatti), seeking a new home, found one in the empty island, and called it “Bet-auw,” *good meadow*, from whence comes its name, Batavia.

History has told how famous the Batavian cavalry became; they were Cæsar’s favourite troops, and the Batavian legion formed the Imperial body-guard down to the time of the Roman Emperor, Vespasian.

North of Batavia dwelt the great Frisian family, and in Cæsar’s time there was no boundary between the tribes, for the ocean did not break in upon the land and form the Zuyder Zee and Dollart Gulf, till many hundreds of years afterwards, not indeed, till the thirteenth century.

In the earliest historic times of this small territory, we thus find a population, partly Celtic, partly German, and

of these two elements were the Netherland inhabitants compounded.

Both Celt and German were tall, fair, large of limb, and blue-eyed ; but the Celt had yellow hair, the German red. Both were slave owners, and both burned their dead ; yet so different were they in social habits and government, that even in the practice of these customs they differed widely.

The Germans had few slaves, and those chiefly prisoners of war. They raised no monument over their dead, burning only the war horse of the deceased at his funeral, and letting the deeds of his life alone speak his praise ; they believed in one Supreme All-Father, and certain forests were consecrated to him. The people who entered these forests for worship did so with feet bound together in token of reverence ; and if they fell they dragged themselves out backwards, refusing to rise. Marriage was honoured among them, and the German presented his bride with oxen, a bridled horse, a sword, shield and spear ; thus marking the feeling that she should share with him his toils and triumphs. Their rulers were chosen by universal suffrage, so that in reality, the sovereignty lay with the people.

In contrast with all this, the Gauls were a priest-ridden people, the Druids deciding all quarrels, and any rebellion against their decisions being regarded as heinous. Nobles, priests, and slaves, formed the three orders of the Gallic family, and the prince was chosen yearly by the nobles. Marriage was almost unknown amongst the Gauls, and nothing save ornaments given to the bride or favourite. The people had no rights whatever, and were all slaves. When a chieftain died, his slaves as well as his favourite horse were burned at his funeral, and huge piles were raised over his tomb.

Add to these points of difference that the Gauls were

an agricultural people, whilst the Germans neglected agriculture for war ; that the Gauls built towns and villages, while the Germans preferred a solitary hut ; and we have a further idea of their dissimilarity.

Cæsar waged terrible war with the inhabitants of the territory we now call the Netherlands. Some he sold as slaves, hunted others like beasts of prey, exterminated whole tribes ; but he formed an alliance with the Batavians, whom the Romans always treated with respect. A noble Batavian (who had adopted the Roman name of Civilis, and had fought twenty-five years in the Roman army, and been ill-treated after his long service), tried to free his country from Roman dominion by effecting a union between the Celtic and German population, but his great struggle was ineffectual except for a brief period.

The Netherlands remained subject provinces, and in the middle of the fourth century we find the Batavian cavalry fighting on the Roman side when the Emperor Julian defeated the Franks and Allemanians (Alle-männer) All-men, (united Germans) at Strasburg.

During the next hundred years the Netherlands were invaded by Franks, Vandals, Alani, Suevi, and Frisians ; at the end of which time the Frank dominion had succeeded the Roman, the German preponderating over the Celtic element.

The Frank Dominion.—Celtic Gaul and the Belgian part of the Netherlands were occupied by the Belgæ, but the Frisians (into which ancient German tribe the old Batavian element had melted) occupied the Northern portion, including the whole of the territory of the future Dutch republic. The Belgæ accepted this new rule of the Franks, but the Frisians struggled long against it, until eventually subjugated by Charlemagne.

To punish a revolt against the Frank dominion, Charles

Martell had fought a great battle, and after killing an immense number of Frisians had forced Christianity on them (A.D. 750), but their conversion in its beginning was the work of their brethren in Britain. It was an Anglo-Saxon monk, Willibrod, who destroyed the images of Woden in the island of Walcheren, and founded many churches in North Holland; Charles Martell rewarded him by making him Bishop of all the Frisians, and thus was founded the famous Bishopric of Utrecht.

Charlemagne left to the Frisians their name of "free," they agreeing to obey the chiefs whom the Frank monarch should appoint to rule over them, provided they were governed by their own laws, A.D. 785. Thus for the first time since the fall of the Roman dominion, the Netherlands were united under one crown.

The last of Charlemagne's successors who governed Lotharingia (viz., the Dukedom of Lorraine and most of the Netherlands and Friesland), was Charles the Simple, who was called King of the West Franks. It was by a treaty, known as the treaty of Bonn, that a German monarch, Henry the Fowler, acquired Lotharingia. The latter, when Duke Henry I. of Saxony, was elected to the Imperial dignity according to German custom; and, because he was engaged in the amusement of fowling when told of his election, was surnamed the Fowler. He is also called King of the East Franks. Thus, in the year 925, the Netherlands passed under German dominion.

The German Rule.—Three years before this, Charles the Simple had granted to Count Dirk the territory of Holland, a narrow nook of land destined to become a considerable empire. The numerous petty sovereignties which existed became hereditary at this time. There were Counts of Namur, Hainault, Limburg, and Zutphen; Dukes of Luxemburg and Gueldres; Barons of Mechlin;

Marquesses of Antwerp; Earls of Flanders; the latter being most powerful after the Counts of Louvain, which last had obtained possession of most of Brabant and part of Lotharingia (Lower Lorraine), and began to call themselves Dukes of Brabant.

A fragment of what was once Charlemagne's empire, viz. : Holland, Zeland, Utrecht, Overysse, Groningen, Drenthe, Friesland, (all contained in a little corner of land), comprised what was hereafter to form one of the most powerful republics of the world, the United States of the Netherlands. But for century after century the Counts of Holland and Bishops of Utrecht exercised a divided sway over the territory.

Thus we see the country broken up into small sovereignties, the separate history of which would be as tedious as it is impossible to narrate, and would present no elevating picture.

The Counts, assisted by inferior judges, held diets three times a year, and thither called their great vassals, who also summoned their lesser ones; but the people themselves had no voice whatever in the government, and were grievously oppressed. For the sake of protection they built their hovels beneath the castle-wall of some small potentate. All kinds of crime, even murders, were punished by fines; thus the ruler was enriched by his people's violation of law: but if a poor man could not pay his fine he became a slave, and a slave suffered the punishment of death for killing his master. In this state of feudal degradation five centuries passed away.

It was in North Holland that the degradation of the people lasted longest. Even in Friesland liberty had been lost, though it had been written in the statute-book of the Frisians: "The Frisians shall be free as long as the wind blows out of the clouds and the world stands."

Slavery was voluntary as well as compulsory, for shipwrecked sailors, vagrants, and others, sold themselves to escape starvation ; and usually to the Church, in which the rigour of slavery was softened. Criminals unable to pay their fines likewise sold themselves. Slaves were of two kinds, the absolute slaves, or *Lyf-eigene* (who had no rights whatever, and whose life and death were in their master's hands), and the villeins who had the power of paying a fixed sum yearly instead of giving their labour.

The Crusades acted most beneficially on the condition of these slaves ; those of them who fought in the Holy Wars became free on their return ; besides which, many were sold to the Church to enable their owners to raise money to join the Crusades, and the place of these slaves was filled by men who were paid for their labour. Still the bulk of the people were extremely miserable ; they had no civil rights, they were taxed beyond their power, whilst the priest and the noble were exempt from taxation.

By degrees the class of freemen and traders became more numerous, built better houses outside the lord's castle gate, were divided into guilds, and had charters granted them. The oldest charter in those provinces, which afterwards constituted the Republic, was granted to the town of Middleburg in the year 1217 by Count William I. of Holland and Countess Joanna of Flanders. It promises government by *law* in place of violence, and commences : "The inhabitants are taken into protection."

Gradually trade with England, the Mediterranean, and the East began to give great prosperity to the towns, and Bruges rose to the first rank in the commercial world. Cities so rich wished for a voice in the government, and in the fourteenth century six of the chief of them in Holland—viz., Dort, Harlem, Delft, Leyden, Gouda, Amsterdam—acquired the right of sending deputies to the Estates or

National Assembly of the Provinces, and these towns, together with the nobles, constituted the parliamentary power of the nation. Thus the liberties of Holland and Flanders grew continually stronger.

Friesland, which had included Holland and most of the territory of the future Republic, was suddenly separated from Holland by one of nature's convulsions. In the thirteenth century the German Ocean rolled over the lowland and joined a lake far inland (the lake of Flevo), thus forming the stormy Zuyder Zee; and, besides engulfing thousands of Frisian villages, cut off the Hollanders from the people in the east of the country, so that the deputies to the General Assemblies could no longer undertake the dangerous journey. West Friesland became in this manner absorbed in Holland, whilst East Friesland remained a rude but self-governed maritime province until the dominion of the Emperor Charles V. In the thirteenth century Friesland was, in fact, a Republic in all but the name, whilst Holland, Flanders, and Brabant had obtained a large share of liberty.

After 400 years of unbroken male descent, the Dirks (Counts of Holland) died out, and the Counts of Hainault succeeded to the countship of Holland, which latter province had already annexed Zeland. Thus Holland, Zeland, and Hainault were united, but the Hainault line expiring half a century later with William IV., who died childless, great civil commotions ensued, and two prominent parties were formed—the Kabblejaws, or codfish party (representing the city faction), against the Hooks, or fish-hooks (representing the nobles).*

* The Hooks were followers of Margaret, Countess of Holland; the Cod-fish were supporters of her son William, who tried to supplant her. These created a civil war (A.D. 1347), which lasted many years.

A nephew of William IV. of Hainault—viz., Duke William of Bavaria, got himself established over the three above-named northern provinces, A.D. 1354. The latter was succeeded by his brother, whose son William married Margaret of Burgundy, daughter of Philip the Bold. He died A.D. 1417, and the heritage of these three Netherland provinces descended to his daughter—the unfortunate Jacqueline—a girl of seventeen.

The Burgundian Rule.—After thirteen years of conflict with her own kinsmen, this princess was dispossessed of her father's domains by her cousin, Philip of Burgundy, falsely called "the Good," and at her death, in the year 1437, he assumed unlimited sovereignty over them. He had previously inherited Flanders and Artois, purchased Namur and usurped Brabant, to which Limburg, Antwerp, and Mechlin had been annexed. By usurping Jacqueline's dominions he became Lord of Holland, Zeland, and Hainault, and titular Lord of Friesland; and he obtained Luxemburg a few years after.

For more than a century the Netherlands were in the power of the House of Burgundy. The bad Philip "the Good" trampled on all the laws and privileges of the provinces he had so unjustly seized, and crushed out liberty as far as he could do; and from this time throughout the Burgundian rule the freedom of the Netherlands remained shackled. But the material prosperity of the country had increased enormously.

The fisheries of Holland had become of great importance, and were besides acting as a nursery for those cool and daring seamen who were to make the Dutch name illustrious throughout the world. Flanders, Brabant, and the other leading provinces had, like Holland, been constantly augmenting their commerce, industry, and wealth.

Printing and the Great Charter.—While Philip "the

Good" was in the height of his power, printing was invented by one Lorenz Coster, an obscure citizen of Harlem, and though his great discovery was ushered in by no pageantry, the world knows now to whom it is most indebted, to the poor sexton, Lorenz Coster, or to Philip, the lord of so many opulent cities and provinces, and the founder of the celebrated Order of the Golden Fleece on his marriage with Isabella of Portugal. There were twenty-five knights of this Order, of which Philip was Head Master, each knight being some grand potentate.

It is true Philip encouraged art, science, and literature, and the painters John and Herbert van Eyck were attracted to Bruges by his generosity, whilst many artists of greater or less merit flourished in the Netherlands at this epoch ; but with all this Philip's first step on assuming the government was to issue a declaration that the privileges and constitutions to which he had sworn as Ruward or guardian, whilst Jacqueline was still living, were to be considered null and void, thus severing at a blow all his obligations. Philip died, February, 1467.

His son, Charles the Bold, removed the Supreme Court of Holland from the Hague to Mechlin ; this, and his maintenance of a standing army were the two great measures by which he crushed the freedom of the Netherlands. Like his father, he administered the government of the country by stadtholders, and "from the condition of flourishing, self-ruled, little Republics to which they had almost attained, they became an ill-assorted, ill-governed realm, neither commonwealth nor empire, neither kingdom nor duchy," with no affection subsisting between ruler and people. At the death of Charles, in the year 1477, all his dominions fell under the power of his only child, the Lady Mary, and a strong desire for liberty moved men of all parties to recover their national constitution.

The Magna Charta of Holland.—The cities of Holland and Flanders and other provinces called a meeting at Ghent, and the result was the formal grant of the Magna Charter of Holland, or “Groot Privilegie” (great privilege), by the Duchess Mary. This charter formed the basis of the Republic. It was a restoration of old rights, not a grant of new ones, and it rescued the land at one blow from the helpless condition to which it had been reduced, placing the sword, the law, and the treasury within the control of parliament.

The Province of Holland gained power to levy all taxes, to declare war, to coin money, to raise armies, and to regulate commerce and manufactures, whilst the liberty of the citizen was also amply provided for. Similar privileges to these were granted to Flanders and many of the other provinces. But the Duchess Mary married the Archduke Maximilian of Austria, and the Netherlands thus fell under the House of Hapsburg (so inseparably connected with Spanish rule), the fifth and last family which governed Holland previous to the establishment of the Republic.

The *Roman*, the *Frank*, the *German*, the *Burgundian*, the *Spaniard* successively bore sway over the Netherlands before the Netherlanders themselves succeeded in planting their own rule in their own land.

The Spanish Rule.—The Duchess Mary being killed by a fall from her horse, her son, when only four years of age, was recognised as her successor by all the Netherlands, though Flanders alone refused to acknowledge his father Maximilian as governor and guardian during the child's minority.

Seizing the boy, the authorities of Flanders carried on the government in his name, maintaining their stand against Maximilian for several years.

But a treaty was at length made between Maximilian

and the Flemings, May the 16th, 1488, by which the former swore to dismiss all foreign troops within four days, and gave hostages for his fidelity, agreeing also that a congress of all the provinces should be summoned annually to provide for the general welfare.

Maximilian, however, broke all his oaths and left the hostages to their fate ; and, backed by an army sent to his aid by his father, the Emperor Frederick, completely subdued the Flemings after a year's struggle, when a new treaty was made, and Maximilian obtained absolute dominion over the Provinces, and the burghers were severely punished for desiring their former freedom. The magistrates of Ghent, Bruges, and Ypres, clothed in black garments and bare-headed, were forced to implore his forgiveness on their knees and to pay 300,000 crowns in gold.

Step by step Maximilian had trampled on the liberties he had sworn to protect, and beheaded numbers of citizens for daring to appeal to their statutes. In 1493 he succeeded to the throne of Germany, and his son, Philip the Fair, then seventeen years of age, received the homage of the Netherlands.

Philip proclaimed null and void all the charters and privileges acquired since the death of Charles the Bold, and on these ignominious terms, the inhabitants, forgetful of the "Groot Privilegie" accepted him as their sovereign.

Friesland, harassed by centuries of domestic and foreign warfare, had been commanded by Maximilian to accept the Duke of Saxony as its Podesta, and this duke got himself acknowledged soon afterwards as lawful sovereign. Seventeen years later Saxony sold her sovereignty of Friesland to the House of Austria for 350,000 crowns, and thus all the Netherlands fell under a common servitude, bitterly regretting, when too late, that they had yielded their liberties without further struggle.

In 1496, Philip the Fair married Joanna, the daughter of Ferdinand and Isabella of Castile and Aragon, and of this momentous marriage was born, in 1500, he who was afterwards Charles V., he who was to unite Spain with the Netherlands, he who regarded the souls as well as the bodies of the people as his personal property.

The countries of Spain and of the Netherlands were in all things widely separated. They were an absolute contrast to each other. In Spain were haughty nobles, accustomed to almost sovereign power; fierce Papists, and a thin population spread over a wide country, a people who despised trade; while in the Netherlands great mercantile activity prevailed, love of liberty and religious ardour.

From the first, Philip the Fair and Ferdinand hated each other, as did ever the Spaniards and Netherlanders. The Provinces were treated as obscure dependencies, and the regency over them given by Charles V. to his near relatives.

Ghent.—We must now say a word of Ghent. At this time it was the most important city in Europe, a republic in all but name. Froissart estimates the number of its fighting men in the fourteenth century at 80,000, and its population was probably 200,000. It was placed in the midst of well-cultivated plains, and surrounded by strong walls nine miles in extent.

The city had jurisdiction over many large but subordinate towns, and with these formed one of the four Estates of Flanders, and claimed moreover, the provisions of the "Great Privilege" or charter, but the liberties of the town had been nominally curtailed by the "calf skin" (Kalf Vel), by which document, Charles the V., then only fifteen, threatened with condign punishment all persons who should say that he had sworn at his inauguration to

observe any privileges claimed by the citizens of Ghent before the peace of Cadsand.*

An attempt to force from Flanders a sum of 400,000 caroli† as part of the subsidy of the Netherlands caused great discontent; the demand was resisted; open rebellion followed, and an effort to ally themselves with Francis I. of France. But he refused his aid, and made known their overtures to Charles V., who determined to crush them at once, and for this purpose went to Ghent in person.

An idea of the wealth of Ghent may be had from the fact that on this occasion it accommodated 60,000 strangers with their 15,000 horses. After staying a month in Ghent, Charles had nineteen of the ringleaders executed and then passed sentence on the city. He annulled all charters, laws, and privileges of Ghent, confiscated all its public property, rents, revenues, houses, artillery, munitions of war, and everything which the corporation or traders possessed in common. The great bell of the city, "Roland" as it was called, was to be removed; 400,000 florins were to be paid down, together with a fine of 150,000, and 6,000 a-year ever after. All officers were henceforth to be appointed by himself, the guilds to be deprived of self-government, and their senators, pensionaries, clerks, and secretaries, with thirty notable burghers, the great dean, and second dean of the Weavers, all dressed in black robes without chains, and bare-headed, were to appear before

* This peace, called Cadsand in Meteren's *Histoire des Pays Bas*, vol. i., p. 7; and termed Casantiana in the *Annals of Brabant* (Francisci Haræi), p. 487, was a peace made between the citizens of Ghent and the Archduke Philip, and was ratified at Hulst, a Belgian town, and afterwards confirmed at Tours, in July or August, 1492. By the terms then agreed on, the privileges of the town were limited according to the decision of the Archduke, the citizens acknowledged his authority, and paid a fine of 78,000 florins,

† A Carolus was worth 23s.

him on the 3d of May, together with one hundred other persons (whomsoever he should name), these to be clothed only in their shirts, and to have halters round their necks, and falling on their knees, to express in a loud voice their sorrow, and entreat forgiveness.

Such was Charles's treatment of Ghent, and from it the Provinces might have foretold what would be his treatment of all rebellion against his sovereign will.

Religion.—Heresy was a plant of early growth in the Netherlands, yet nowhere was heresy so persecuted. Suspected persons suffered deaths and tortures so terrible that the pen refuses to record them. In Flanders, the priests invented a new death for the Waldenses, and such like malefactors. When a heretic's guilt was proved by the hot iron or other torture, he was flayed half way down, and then swarms of bees let loose upon his bleeding body to sting him to death! *Yet* heresy increased. The power and luxury of the clergy increased also.

The Bishops of Utrecht, no longer the defenders of the people, behaved like Popes, and exacted homage from the Provinces. They taxed all implements of industry, ploughs, horses, oxen, etc., and they uttered terrible anathemas in the name of the Lord who had commanded His disciples to bless their persecutors. Men who did not tremble at fire or sword trembled at the insane imprecations, and the curses pronounced against them "in house, barn, bed, field, path, city, castle—in battle, in praying, in speaking, in silence, in eating, in drinking, in sleeping—in taste, hearing, smell, and all the senses—against eyes, head and body, from the crown of the head to the soles of the feet." Much more of a like nature was added, as ridiculous to us as it was fearful to the men of those times.

But by the end of the thirteenth century the clerical power was beginning to decline. The Barons began to

ask why the clergy should hold vast estates and not be taxed, and towards the end of the fourteenth century Wyklif's doctrine had made great progress in the land. In the beginning of the fifteenth century, when the execution of Huss and Jerome of Prague produced the Bohemian rebellion, the Pope proclaimed a crusade against the Hussites, and many Netherlanders joined it, but came back with a sympathy for the Reformed religion.

With the invention of printing the Reformation also made an immense step. A Bible which once cost 500 crowns could now be had for five. Many greedy priests became small shop-keepers, for as (being priests, they were exempt from taxation); they could afford to sell cheaply, and thus they grew rich and excited jealousy.

Besides all this, the sale of pardons became a scandal. All crimes could be committed at a fixed price. Murders, thefts, and every imaginable sin could be accomplished with impunity if a man had money to buy his pardon from the priests. The Pope, with the like shamelessness, sold the right to enter Paradise. All these things gradually brought discredit on the Church, and with the beginning of the sixteenth century the Reformation was gathering strength.

But the traffic in absolutions went on, whilst men who read their Bible saw that Heaven was not to be bought by criminals for gold. Then Luther's words of fire flew through Germany into the Netherlands, their echo reaching even to Spain and as far as Jerusalem. Charles V. had soon issued edicts to suppress the Reformation in the Netherlands. His edict, issued entirely without the sanction of the States, runs thus :—(Date 1521) "As it appears that the aforesaid Martin (Luther) is not a man, but a devil under the form of a man, and clothed in the dress of a priest, the better to bring the human race to hell . . .

therefore all his disciples and converts are to be punished with death and forfeiture of all their goods."

This was issued at Worms, and carried into immediate effect. The dreadful work of persecution began, and the Papal Inquisition was introduced into the Netherlands to assist it. July 1st, 1523, the first victims to Lutheranism were burnt at Brussels. These were two Augustine monks.

Another edict forbade all reading of the Scriptures or devotion, all discussions concerning faith, the sacraments, or the Papal authority, or other religious matters, on pain of death. The fires were constantly supplied with the bodies of men and women. Thousands of innocent persons were thus butchered by Charles in the Netherlands.

In 1533, the Queen Dowager, Mary of Hungary, who was the Emperor's sister, and Regent of the Provinces, wrote to her brother that, in her opinion, all heretics, *whether repentant or not*, should be prosecuted with such severity as that error should be at once extinguished, *care only being taken that the Provinces were not entirely depopulated*. Two years later an Imperial edict, issued at Brussels, condemned *all* heretics to death, repentant men to be executed, repentant women to be buried alive; non-repentant heretics to be burned. Such was the law, a law severely enforced for *twenty years*! In the midst of this carnage, the Emperor sent for his son, Philip, to receive the homage of the Netherlands.

Antwerp.—The chief city of the Netherlands was Antwerp, which had become the great commercial capital of the world, and now ranked even before such cities as Venice or Bruges. Though legend said it derived its name from the custom of a giant (who lived on the banks of the Scheldt) cutting off and casting into the river the right hands of those who failed to give him half the merchandise which passed by his castle, and hence the name

"Hand-werpen," "hand-throwing," it is more reasonable to suppose the simpler derivation was from "an-t-werf," "on the wharf."

Antwerp surpassed all cities save Paris in population, none approached it in trade; it was the principal exchange of Europe, its government was very free, and its Sovereign-Marquis was solemnly sworn to obey its charters and laws. There were but few poor in this prosperous city, and these few were sought out by almoners. The schools were excellent and cheap, and almost every child could read and write and speak two languages. The most renowned edifices in Europe were within this beautiful city, and its capacious port received 2,500 vessels, while 500 came and went daily.

Education.—The standard of education was much higher in the flourishing Netherland cities than in most other places of Europe. Classics, music, modern languages (particularly French) were taught even among the trading class. There were many societies for mutual support and improvement,—military clubs of musketeers, cross-bowmen, archers, and swordsmen in every town, who once a year kept holiday and each chose one of their number, renowned for prowess, as king of the order. There were also the famous guilds of rhetoric, which were associations of mechanics for the purpose of dramatic or musical or poetic exhibition. These associations drew the people together, and we gain an idea of their importance from the fact that Philip the Fair enrolled himself as a member of one of these societies; they existed in obscure villages as well as in the towns. The periodic jubilees celebrated in the different capital cities in which all the guilds of rhetoric were invited to compete in processions, brilliant costumes, charades, and trials of dramatic or poetic skill, were called "land jewels."

Thus at the end of fifteen centuries we find in the place

of savages living among swamps and thickets, 3,000,000 of the most industrious, intelligent, thriving people in the world, possessing the boldest sailors, the most enterprising merchants, owning the finest cattle in Europe. Holland and Flanders, inhabited by the same race, vied with each other in the pursuits of civilization. Flemish skill in the fine arts and in mechanics was unrivalled. Flemish fabrics were exported to all parts of the world. Netherland tapestries, silks, and linen were prized everywhere. The Netherlanders copied the shawls and silks of India with wonderful accuracy. Belgian musicians were famous, and her artists had been so for a century past. The women were beautiful and vigorous, their manners frank and independent, their morality and decorum undoubted. It is meet to note this as women sustained a prominent part in many dramas in the struggle for freedom.

It was but a small extent of land which enclosed this freedom-loving people. There were 17 provinces, in which were 208 walled cities, 150 towns, 6,300 villages, with other small hamlets, all guarded by a belt of 60 very strong fortresses. These provinces were about to become the prey of a man of foreign blood, speech, and religion—that man was Philip II. of Spain, the husband of Mary Tudor of England.

CHAPTER II.

BRUSSELS AND THE ABDICATION.

It was the 25th of October, 1555. The Estates of the Netherlands were assembled in the great hall of the palace in Brussels to witness an unusual ceremony, no less than that of the abdication of Charles V.

Brussels.—Brussels had been a city for more than five centuries. It now had a population of 100,000 ; its walls, 200 years old, were six miles in circumference, and were encompassed by shady groves, cultivated gardens, and corn fields, while at the foot of the town flowed the river Senne. The towers of the old ducal palace of Brabant overlooked its thickly-wooded park on the left, and on the right rose the stately mansions of Orange, Egmont, Aremberg, and other Flemish grandees ; the great forest of Soignies, dotted with monasteries and convents, and full of game, (where the nobles chased the wild boar and the stag), stretched within a quarter of a mile of the city walls. The inhabitants of Brussels were as prosperous and intelligent as any in Europe, amongst them were fifty-two guilds of artisans, and their tapestry ranked amongst the wonders of the world. Brussels had seven churches (the chief of which was St. Gudule), seven great squares, seven city gates, and on this great occasion it was noted that it had seven crowned heads within its walls.

The palace had been the residence of the Dukes of Brabant since the year 1300. Its hall was celebrated for

its size ; and a spacious platform had now been erected at its west end, on which were rows of seats covered with tapestry, and over the centre of which hung a splendid canopy decorated with the arms of Burgundy. Beneath it were placed three gilded arm-chairs, and magistrates in chain and gown, and officers in civic uniform, filled every allotted seat, while archers kept the door—when, as the clock struck three, the chief actors in the forthcoming ceremony appeared. Charles V. entered, leaning on the shoulder of the Prince of Orange. Following Charles were his son Philip, Mary of Hungary (Regent of the Netherlands), the Arch-duke Maximilian, the Duke of Savoy, and many other great personages, accompanied by a glittering throng of warriors, governors, and Knights of the Fleece. There, too, came the dark, magnificent Count Egmont, with flowing hair, soft brown eyes, and delicate features ; but in close attendance on the Emperor was the “Immortal Prince of Orange.” Immortal he has been called by one of the greatest of historians, and he well deserves the appellation.

The whole company rose as the Emperor entered, and by his command again seated themselves. Charles V. was now fifty-five years old, and already decrepit, although he had once been able to vanquish the bull at a bull fight, and to bear every privation except that of fasting. He was tall, broad-shouldered, and deep chested, but crippled in hands, knees, and legs ; he supported himself on a crutch, and came in with difficulty. He was very ugly, had white hair clipped close, with shaggy beard, a dark blue eye, spacious forehead, aquiline but crooked nose, a heavy, hanging underlip, and lower jaw so protruding as to make it impossible for him to speak a sentence intelligibly. His son Philip, to whom he was now to renounce most of his mighty possessions, was a meagre, short man, with thin legs, narrow

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chest, a face like his father's, a yellow, pointed beard, thin, light hair, and having the shrinking air of an invalid, and he looked on the ground when he spoke.

When the three royal personages were seated under the canopy, Philibert de Bruxelles, a member of the Privy Council of the Netherlands, rose by the Emperor's command and made a long oration. He spoke of the Emperor's warm affection for the Provinces, of his deep regret that failing health compelled him to resign his sovereignty over them; but he rejoiced that his son Philip, who had lately married the Queen of England, was both vigorous and experienced. He then read the Deed of Cession by which Philip, already King of Sicily, Naples, Milan, and titular King of England, France, and Jerusalem, received all the duchies, marquises, earldoms, baronies, cities, towns, and castles which comprised the Netherlands.

There was a buzz of admiration; there were murmurs of regret. The Emperor rose, and leaning on his crutch, beckoned to the young man on whom he had leaned when entering (the Prince of Orange), a young man, dark, symmetrical, small, with brown hair and moustache, peaked beard, lofty forehead, well-opened brown eyes, dressed in magnificent apparel, and whom, notwithstanding his youth (he was but two-and-twenty), the Emperor had appointed to command the army-in-chief against such men as Coligny, and the Duc de Nevers. Supported then by Orange, the Emperor read an address, in which he spoke of his own nine expeditions to Germany, six to Spain, seven to Italy, four to France, ten to the Netherlands, two to England, two to Africa, and eleven voyages by sea. He said that religion and the welfare of his subjects had been his sole aim. Turning to Philip, he presented him as a prince to whom they (the Netherlanders) should render all obedience. He then entreated their forgiveness for any short-

comings during his rule over them, and sank, pale, exhausted and weeping, on his seat.

The whole assembly was melted. Philip now fell on his knees, and his father made the sign of the cross over him. Philip, still kneeling, kissed the Emperor's hand, who, raising him, said how much he compassionated his son for having to bear the burden of sovereignty. Then Philip himself addressed a few words to the assembly through an interpreter. Finally, Jacob Maas, a member of the Council of Brabant, accepted the Emperor's abdication in the name of the States-General, and Queen Mary having also made a speech resigning her office as Regent, the ceremony terminated, and Charles slowly left the hall as he had entered it.

It has already been said how much the assembled multitude was moved ; but there was no reason for any regret. Charles had sinned greatly against the Netherlanders ; their interests had never been his care, nor did he ever consult them about the expenditure of the two and a half millions of gold which they furnished annually, but rebuked them if they dared to inquire as to the disposal of this large contribution. He desired only to crush the Reformation, to leave an immense inheritance to Philip, to annihilate the liberties of the Netherlands. Still more, it was *his* hand which planted the terrible Inquisition in the land. The number of Netherlanders burned, strangled, beheaded, or buried alive by his orders for the offence of reading the Scriptures, has been estimated to be between fifty thousand and one hundred thousand. And Charles V. had not even the excuse of being moved by religious zeal in his persecutions, for he permitted the German troops (because he wanted their services) to attend Protestant worship regularly ; thus falling in with the Reformation in Germany to suit himself, whilst the fires were fed by his victims in the Provinces.

Yet he dared to mingle his tears with those of the people he was leaving, to speak of regrets and affection! A good manner, the fact that he was a clever linguist, and a born soldier, had made him popular, notwithstanding that he was avaricious, and so false as to earn the appellation of "Charles qui triche."

He had always eaten enormously, and in consequence his frame was now a wreck. It was his custom to breakfast at five o'clock in the morning on a fowl, dressed with milk, sugar, and spices; to dine at noon off twenty different dishes; to eat two suppers, one at five, the other at midnight, this last meal being the heartiest of the four; and besides, to devour quantities of pastry and sweetmeats, and to drink flagons of Rhine wine.

Much has been said about his simple way of life after his abdication: how, caring nothing for the state and pomp he had left, he occupied himself by digging in his garden, and with the charms of a simple country life. This is not a correct picture of Charles in his retirement. His thoughts were full of the busy world he had quitted; he read nothing but despatches, never uttered a lofty sentiment, showed much savage bigotry, and continued to devour sardine omelettes, Estremadura sausages, eel pies, pickled partridges, fat capons, quince syrups, iced beer, as greedily as ever, regretting too that he had not been guilty of one more crime, that of silencing Luther whilst it was possible.

CHAPTER III.

PHILIP.

THE new master whom the Netherlands had now received was born in May, 1527, and was twenty-eight years old. At sixteen he had married his cousin, Maria of Portugal, who died the following year after the birth of a son, Don Carlos. Philip was twenty-one when he first appeared in the Netherlands, and he then took an oath without any reservation to support all their privileges and constitutions. His reception had been magnificent, but his haughty manner had produced a most unfavourable impression. He had now received all his father's dominions except the Archduchy of Austria and the hereditary German dependencies which had been transferred to his uncle Ferdinand; but Philip was King of all the Spanish kingdoms, and of both Sicilies, Absolute Dominator in Asia, Africa, and America, Duke of Milan and of both Burgundies, and, as has been said, hereditary sovereign of the seventeen provinces of the Netherlands, as well as titular King of England, France, and Jerusalem.

He was a poor creature, however, that was weighted with so many dignities; timid, fragile, and sickly, his talents below mediocrity, his mind incredibly small; slow in deciding a matter, slower still in communicating his decisions, excessively bigotted, and consulting his confessor about the most trifling actions of his life. He spoke nothing but Spanish, even in that cultivated age, indeed he hated

talking, and would write a letter of eighteen pages when his correspondent was in the next room, and when a few clear words would have settled the business. He took but little exercise, slept a good deal, and was most strict in attending religious services, was as regular at mass, vespers, and sermons as a monk, all of which observances did not prevent him being grossly immoral. He esteemed no nation but the Spanish; through them he governed, and during his residence at Brussels nine-tenths of his court was made up of Spaniards. His Council was composed of five or six *grandees*, the chief of whom were the Duke of Alva and Ruy Gomez da Silva, Count de Melito, the latter of whom had been brought up with Philip though eight years his senior, and was now Philip's valet, State Counsellor, and Finance Minister all in one. He dressed and undressed his master, read or talked him to sleep, superintended all arrangements in his household, admitted people to his presence, managed an enormous correspondence; but, like Philip, he was very ignorant. Unlike him, however, he had a pleasant manner, could speak fluently, and knew how to conceal his ignorance. To such a man as this, and to such a man as Philip, were the destinies of the Netherlands submitted.

The new Regent appointed for the Netherlands was the Duke of Savoy, Philip's first cousin, the son of Charles the Fifth's sister who had married the Duke of Savoy. However, the latter had been beggared by spoliations in time of truce, so that his son, the new Regent of the Netherlands, had lost his inheritance, and had nothing but his sword and the money he obtained by buying distinguished prisoners of war for a small sum from the soldiers who had captured them, and who were ignorant of their rank, and then exacting from his prisoners a large ransom. Such a man hated peace. But he now received a salary as

Governor of the Netherlands, besides something from remains of his possessions in Nice and Piedmont.

Charles V. had desired that the beginning of his son's reign should be peaceful, and he who had warred so much had concluded a truce for five years by land and sea between Spain and France, Flanders and Italy. Unbounded joy was displayed through the Netherlands at this prospect of peace, for it was the Netherland provinces that furnished money and soldiers whilst Spain, France, and Italy contended with each other, and it was they who reaped no advantage. So now oxen were roasted whole, the streets (soon to be reddened by blood) ran red with wine; a hundred arches were erected to welcome Philip, and a profusion of flowers strewn before him, though it was February.

Philip, however, saw all this rejoicing with marked displeasure, for, like his father, he wished to nullify the Netherland laws by cancelling their Constitution, and to stamp out all differences of faith by planting the Inquisition firmly in the land. To carry out these measures he needed a standing army; besides, he contemplated a war with France. Now the joy at the conclusion of peace showed that the people expected the army to be disbanded.

During the previous December, however, the Pope had entered into a treaty with the French monarch, which made the solemn truce before concluded a mere farce; for while Henry, King of France, and Philip's plenipotentiaries had exchanged vows of peace, it was secretly arranged that France should support a scheme by which the Pope should be enabled to drive the Spaniards entirely out of Italy. In return for this aid the French king was to gain thrones for his younger children out of some of Philip's confiscated lands. This secret treaty was suspected, though of course it was undeclared. Great was the Pope's anger when the truce between France and Spain was (after much express delay)

made known to him by Cardinal de Tournon, who acted for the French Government. He complained that he should be left to fight Spain single-handed, although the Cardinal declared that France would certainly hold to the secret league, not to the openly concluded truce.

The Pope, a despotic, warlike man, who wished to raise the temporal power of Rome by means of the Inquisition, detested Spain, and actually raved at the Spaniards as heretics, calling them "the very dregs of the earth." Cardinal Caraffa, the Pope's nephew, stirred up his uncle's anger still more, wishing for an immediate rupture between France and Spain; thus, notwithstanding the peace so recently concluded, he made all the mischief he could in order to promote a war. Whilst affairs were in this state, an accident caused an open quarrel with Spain.

The Spanish ambassador at Rome used to go out hunting early, and had long enjoyed the privilege of having the gates of the city opened for him before the usual hour; one morning this courtesy was refused him, and he, enraged, forced his way out. The Pope was furious when he heard of it, and Cardinal Caraffa, as usual, inflamed his anger, and refused to receive the Envoy when he called to explain matters. Caraffa then set off post haste for Paris, where on arriving he told the king that he must keep to the *secret* treaty with the Pope, and defend him against Spain, or he would be breaking all laws both human and divine. He added that he absolved the king from all other obligations, and that he might make war on Spain without so much as a declaration of his intentions. After this the Cardinal made a public entry into Paris on his mule, the poor deluded people flocking round the man whom they accounted so holy, to entreat his blessing, and with fervent blessings he *appeared* to answer them, whilst all the while he uttered the most mocking words in a language which they did not understand.

The King of France yielded to the Cardinal's persuasions, and thus, notwithstanding the treaty of peace concluded for five years, war between Spain and France recommenced, in which England and the Netherlands were forced to take a part. Philip was beyond measure troubled at finding himself opposed to the Pope! But the battle of St. Quentin, a most brilliant victory, won by Count Egmont in Picardy, brought the operations in Italy to an end.

St. Quentin.—We must now go back one year in date. At the time when the French Court resolved, in the disgraceful way just related, to break the truce with Spain, Admiral Coligny was Governor of Picardy, and he received orders to make a foray upon the frontiers of Flanders, Flanders being so near and one of Spain's possessions.

Philip had gone to England to browbeat his wife into sending men and money to help him, and she did send an army of 8,000 men, and thus England found herself engaged in the war. These forces joined the camp before St. Quentin. But Philip's army was mainly composed of Netherland troops and some Germans; 35,000 foot and 12,000 horse advanced through Namur, and assembled at Givet, under the Duke of Savoy, the Regent of the Netherlands, who held the chief command. All the Netherland grandees were there also, amongst others, Orange and Egmont. We will say a few words here of the latter, as he is the hero of St. Quentin.

Lamoral, Count of Egmont, Prince of Gavere, was now nearly thirty-six years old, "young, noble, wealthy, handsome, and valiant." The ancient castle, town, and lordship, whence Egmont derived his name and ordinary title, were situated on the North-west edge of the narrow peninsula of North Holland, washed by the stormy waters of the German Ocean. His mother was Françoise de Luxemburg, Princess

of Gavere, through whom he inherited many of the proudest titles and richest estates in Flanders. He had been a page in the Emperor's household, and had served an apprenticeship with him in Barbary as a hardy soldier, distinguishing himself at the age of nineteen for courage and devotion. He was, indeed, renowned for bravery, having shown himself a brilliant soldier; he had married, in 1545, Sabina of Bavaria, sister of Frederic the Elector-Palatine, and few royal weddings had been more magnificent than his. He had been at Charles the Fifth's side during a severe siege, that of Metz, and he had also been at the head of the splendid embassy, which went to England to ask for Philip the hand of Mary Tudor, and he had been present at the marriage.

St Quentin in Picardy, the most important point between Philip's army and Paris, was now in imminent danger. It was a wealthy city, situated on an elevation over the river Somme, and surrounded with suburbs enclosing orchards and gardens. A lake, very deep in some parts, flowed round three sides of the town, but in others was more of the nature of a morass. The people were industrious and many of them very rich; but the place was in no condition to stand a siege, for it was in sore need of men and supplies which had been earnestly begged for. The town was so important that the safety of France seemed to depend on its security. If it fell, (and already one of its suburbs was in the enemy's hands), Paris would probably fall too. A gallant attempt was made by the Constable of France, de Montmorency, to introduce reinforcements into St. Quentin, over the morass, and also by sending soldiers across a running stream in boats. But he had to act in full view of the enemy, fourteen companies of Spaniards being stationed in the faubourg, and two companies lying in the path of the advancing French.

The Spaniards stood their ground for a moment, but retreated as a cannonade was suddenly opened on them by the French on the Duke of Savoy's quarters. The Duke's tent was torn up, and he had barely time to escape.

Constable de Montmorency, taking advantage of the confusion ensuing, began to transport his troops across the morass, but several boats, swamped by numbers, overturned and the men perished, whilst many who had crossed could not effect a landing on the steep and dangerous bank opposite, and only about 500, under Andelot, Coligny's brother, effected an entrance.

Meantime, a council was held in Egmont's tent. It was undecided what to do next, whether an engagement should be risked, or the Constable be allowed to withdraw his army. Count Egmont was vehement in his wish to measure arms with the great captain of his age, the Constable Montmorency, who was attended by princes of the royal blood, and so many proud nobles, followed by the bravest troops of France. Should they be permitted to depart unmolested?—Such an opportunity lost without a struggle? The eloquence of the Netherland noble carried the day; it was determined to cut off the Constable's retreat.

The quick glance of Egmont had detected the point at which this might be done, viz. : through a narrow defile between overhanging hills. As the retreating French approached the pass, the signal of assault was given by Count Egmont. The rout was sudden and total, the defeat absolute; half the French troops then engaged lost their lives on the field, and the remainder were captured or disorganized. The Constable himself was wounded and taken prisoner. The Duke d'Enghien was shot after fighting valiantly, and a host of French *grande*s taken prisoners, while of Philip's army, only fifty lost their lives. Rarely had a Spanish king gained such a triumph, and

this triumph was owing to the promptitude and valour of Count Egmont. The battle thus won was so brilliant that it is worthy to be placed with Crécy and Agincourt. By this victory, the Flemish frontier was saved for a time from the miseries of war, and a deadly blow struck at the very heart of France. To celebrate it Philip built the splendid palace of the Escorial.

The French army had been thus cut to pieces, but the city of St. Quentin was still untaken, although garrisoned by only 800 men. Coligny held out bravely, and Philip refused to advance on Paris till St. Quentin should be reduced. After a steady cannonade, continued for some days, his troops effected an entrance into the town through a tower, and a frightful carnage succeeded the horrible sack of the city, which was set on fire in some places. The extreme horrors of the work which went on after the city was captured cannot be dwelt on here. The killing, plundering, and burning lasted three days and nights. The streets were encumbered with unburied dead; the women and children, to the number of 3,500, were compelled to depart on foot, many of them sorely wounded and starving. St. Quentin was to be re-annexed to the Netherlands, and not a man, woman, or child, who could speak the French language, to be allowed to remain in the town.

The Admiral Coligny and his brother were of course taken prisoners, and it was whilst the Admiral lay for weeks ill of fever at Antwerp that he was converted to the reformed faith by reading the Scriptures. Philip, who did not know how to utilise a victory (after wasting time in besieging unimportant places), disbanded his army, and himself went to Brussels, October 12th.

After Egmont's great victory in Picardy, the French government recalled the Duc de Guise from his command

in Italy to defend the French frontier, and the Pope was left to make the best peace he could. He did so by leaving in the lurch the King of France, who had been forced into war by him; but Philip's absurd bigotry actually reversed the position of himself and his adversary. Philip had been excessively concerned to know whether he should lose his title of "Most Catholic King" for undertaking even a defensive war against the Holy Father; and he now instructed his general in Italy—the Duke of Alva—to say that he desired no fruit from his victory at St. Quentin, except a full pardon from His Holiness for having been forced to wage a war in self-defence against him. A ludicrous and friendly siege of Rome was then arranged; Alva, with just but secret indignation, restoring nearly one hundred captured towns to the Pope, on condition that their fortifications should be destroyed and the French alliance renounced. Very little glory was reaped by any of the combatants, and all were losers save one man—the new Regent of the Netherlands—who regained his inheritance of Savoy soon afterwards, by a peace concluded once more between France and Spain.

The Duc de Guise had come post haste from Italy on hearing of the loss of St. Quentin, and during Philip's dilatory proceedings had recruited a considerable army, which in January, 1558, was ready to take the field. The French Cabinet had determined not to try to win back the lost places in Picardy but to carry the war into the enemy's country. So on the first of January, 1558, the Duc de Guise appeared before Calais, and after a tremendous cannonade, which lasted a week, and was heard as far distant as Antwerp, the city was taken, having been originally won after a year's siege, and having been held 210 years. Thus England lost her last possession on French soil.

It was at this time that a memorable interview took

place between two ecclesiastics—viz. : the Bishop of Arras (afterwards Cardinal Granvelle) and the Cardinal de Lorraine, at Peronne; memorable because the crafty bishop (of whom much more will appear in this history), acting in Philip's interests, so flattered the Cardinal (who was the brother of the Duc de Guise) that that prelate returned to France determined to effect a peace with Spain. The Bishop of Arras had told the Cardinal that the destiny of Europe lay in his hands and in those of the Duc de Guise, and that the interests of France, Spain, religion and humanity, made it imperative on him to put an end to the war between Catholic countries, and to join in extirpating heresy.

These negotiations were kept secret, and hostilities were renewed soon after, the Duc de Guise reducing Thionville, a city of great importance in Luxembourg; but whether from accident or design he neglected to follow up his success against Philip. Marshal de Thermes, the new French Governor of Calais, had been directed to ravage the neighbouring country, and the Duc de Guise making a junction with the Marshal, they were together to form a barrier against the whole Netherland frontier. De Thermes assaulted and pillaged Dunkirk, and his army went on its way burning, plundering, killing, as far as Nieuport, when Count Egmont was sent to intercept De Thermes' army, now on its return. He determined to destroy De Thermes and all his force, or sacrifice himself in the attempt; and so the hero of St. Quentin posted his army at Gravelines, a small town near the sea, midway between Calais and Dunkirk.

Gravelines.—De Thermes suddenly became aware of the enemy in his path, and, though seriously ill, led his army in person against it. He held a council of officers that night (July the 12th), at which it was resolved if possible

to escape along the sands to Calais. Next morning then he crossed the river Aa below Gravelines. Egmont crossed too, just above the town, and drew up his whole force for battle. The sea was on De Thermes' right, the Aa behind him, the enemy in front. He made a barricade on his left with his waggons and baggage, placed his artillery in front, and behind it arranged his cavalry.

Egmont divided his horse into five squadrons, and took the post of danger himself in the very front of the battle ; then, crying, " The foe is ours already ! follow me, all who love their fatherland ! " he dashed upon the enemy. His horse was shot under him, but he mounted another and again cheered on his men. A fierce, tumultuous battle ensued upon the sands, hand to hand, foot to foot, where all mingled together in the dreadful struggle. For a long time the battle raged with uncertain success, but some English ships appearing and firing on De Thermes' army, and some German cavalry, sent by Egmont, succeeding in getting round De Thermes' left flank, created a panic, and the fate of the day was decided. Fifteen hundred French were killed in action, as many drowned, while the infuriated peasants attacked numbers, and the army of De Thermes was totally destroyed ; so that France was now at Philip's feet, and the French king forced to make a most unfavourable peace. Within eleven months after St. Quentin, the Netherland hero—Count Egmont—had gained another victory so brilliant that it enabled his sovereign to dictate terms of peace. Egmont became the idol of his country and of the army, but he gained one enemy by his victory—the Duke of Alva—whom we must remember was a Spaniard, and probably jealous of Egmont's great success.

Cateau Cambresis.—Montmorency and the Prince of Orange opened the peace negotiations, and on the 3d of April, 1559, the treaty between France and Spain was

ratified. By this treaty both kings bound themselves to maintain the Catholic worship by all means, and to restore the conquests made by each country during the preceding eight years. The Duke of Savoy was changed by this treaty into a sovereign. He was to receive back all his estates and to marry the French king's sister, Margaret. Thus a new regent would have to be chosen for the Netherlands, as the duke had now his own land to rule.

By the treaty aforesaid it was also arranged that Philip was to marry for his third wife the French king's daughter Isabella, with a dowry of 400,000 crowns. [Mary of England had died the previous November, and Philip had not even made a pretence of sorrow. His father, Charles V. also died during the peace negotiations, and for him Philip mourned in state two days.]

The treaty of peace we have detailed above was called the Peace of Cateau Cambresis (often written Chateau Cambresis), and in pledge of its fulfilment the King of France selected four hostages to accompany him to Paris. One of these hostages was the Prince of Orange, from which choice an important result ensued. French history tells how Henry II. of France died this year, July the 10th, of a wound received in a tournament ; he who by violating his word and against his country's interests, had entered into a causeless war, lost his life in a fictitious combat at the celebration of peace. But before his death he had revealed an important secret to the Prince of Orange.

William the Silent.—It has been said that the latter was one of the hostages. One day, while hunting with Henry II. in the forest of Vincennes, the Prince and the King found themselves separated from the rest of the company. Henry's mind was full of the great scheme just formed between Philip and himself to extirpate heresy by a general assassination of the heretics themselves. Philip

had been most anxious to conclude the treaty of peace that he might the sooner arrange with Henry a massacre of all Protestants in France and the Netherlands. The secret murder of thousands was what dwelt nearest the hearts of these two kings. Full of the plot, and imagining that the Prince of Orange was in the secret, the King began to tell the Prince that he should never be easy till he got rid of the "accursed vermin," and that he hoped by the aid of his son and brother Philip, soon to be master of the rebels. Then he detailed his plan to Orange. The Prince, though horror-struck, was yet prudent enough to be silent, and kept his countenance while the King finished his dreadful recital. By no word or look did the Prince reveal his feelings, and thus earned his title of The Silent. But his purpose to defeat the massacre was fixed from that hour, and he immediately exerted his efforts in that direction.

The New Regent, Margaret.—Immense joy was felt in the Netherlands at the new Peace. There were gorgeous processions, oxen roasted whole, pigs raced for by men blind-fold, and in sacks, prizes set on poles, and every demonstration of pleasure. But Philip had not made peace for merry-making, but for killing heretics. He had always hated the Netherlands, and was anxious to return to Spain, but had first to appoint a new Regent, as the Duke of Savoy had regained his inheritance. The person he chose was his natural sister, the Duchess Margaret of Parma. The Duchess Margaret had been brought up in the Netherlands, by Margaret of Savoy (then Regent of these Provinces), and on the death of the latter, by Queen Mary of Hungary. Margaret of Parma had been twice married to nephews of different popes. At twelve years old to her first husband, and he dying the following year, she allied herself at the age of twenty to Alexander, nephew of Pope Paul III., a boy of only thirteen, after-

wards created Duke of Parma and Piacenza. Margaret was thirty-seven years of age when she became Regent of the Netherlands. She was a bigoted Romanist, an expert horsewoman, of masculine appearance, had been carefully educated in deceit, and held Protestants to be the worst kind of criminals.

Plan for the Government of the Netherlands.—Philip had appointed a Privy Council, a Council of Finance, and a State Council to manage the affairs of government in the Provinces. Of these the latter was the most important, and superintended all high affairs of state, war, treaties, and internal affairs. It was composed of eight members, amongst whom were Count Egmont, the Prince of Orange, and Count Horn. The latter was to accompany Philip to Spain, there to receive instructions concerning the Netherlands. But it soon became plain that three members of the State Council held the chief power, namely, the Bishop of Arras, Baron Berlaymont (a bitter Papist), and Viglius van Aylta van Zuichem, a Frisian, a travelled and learned man, but one who hated liberty of religion, and said it ought never to be tolerated. Stadtholders were also appointed for the different provinces; amongst whom we find Count Egmont, Stadtholder for Flanders and Artois, and the Prince of Orange for Zeland and Utrecht. All the Stadtholders were Commanders-in-Chief of the military forces in the Provinces, which in time of peace amounted to only 3,000 men—a small force, it is true, but composed of the *Bandes d'Ordonnance*, mounted *gendarmierie*, the best disciplined cavalry in Europe.

The Mercenaries.—Besides these Philip also left a force of 4,000 foreign mercenaries, ostensibly to protect the Provinces, but in reality to coerce them. These troops, insolent in the extreme, oppressed the people in an incredible manner.

Philip's Departure.—Philip had convoked the Estates of the Provinces to meet at Ghent, the 7th of August, 1559, to receive his farewell. He then spoke of his *intense love* for them, of how gladly he would have remained with them if circumstances did not force him to go, adding that all the money he had received from them had been spent on their protection, and that he now needed another sum of 3,000,000 gold florins, which would also be used for their benefit. He next presented to them the new Regent, declared that she too felt a profound affection for the Netherlands, the land of her birth, concluding by saying that all Governors, Councillors, and others having authority, were instructed to enforce every edict for the extirpation of heresy, and to do their utmost to accomplish this great end. It was the Bishop of Arras who made this speech for Philip, the king sitting by.

After this address the deputies requested permission to deliberate, and, on the following day, re-assembled. Then the Estates of Artois read first their answer. They spoke of their great affection for His Majesty, that they were willing to place in his hands not only the remains of their property, but the last drop of their blood. Philip heard this with a pleased face, but his smile changed as they continued. They earnestly entreated his Majesty to withdraw the foreign troops forthwith. Philip threw himself violently on the chair of state, changed colour rapidly, and it was plain that he was deeply offended. The other provinces were even more clear in their expressions about the withdrawal of the foreign soldiers, and the king did not pretend to hide his anger.

The States-General (that is the General Assembly of Deputies of the Provinces), had also drawn up a formal remonstrance signed by the Prince of Orange, Count Egmont, and many leading nobles, representing the dis-

graceful disorders practised by the mercenaries, their pillaging, insolence, and tyranny, day and day, so that the town of Marienburg, and whole towns besides, had been deserted by their inhabitants on that account. Philip was furious; he rose and rushed away from the Assembly, asking if they expected him, too, their sovereign, to leave at once? But he wanted money, and therefore dissembled, saying that he would send away the troops in three or four months when he had paid them, but that *now* they were needed to defend the country. And having given final instructions, and very strong ones, about the decrees for the burning, strangling, and burying alive of heretics, to be carried out with vigour, he took leave of the Estates at another meeting with seeming good will. But his anger could not be quite concealed, for when the Prince of Orange, with other nobles, came to witness his departure and pay their final respects, Philip turned on the Prince scowling, reproaching him with thwarting all his plans, and when Orange replied that anything which he had done, had been done according to law, through the Estates, he seized the Prince's wrist in fury, shaking it, and crying out in Spanish, "*Not* the Estates, but *you, you, you!*" After this insult the Prince did not go on board Philip's ship for another leave taking; perhaps had he done so, he would never have been allowed to return. Philip had a stormy voyage to Spain.

The Auto-da-fé.—He arrived there on the 8th of September, and celebrated his safe return by the terrible spectacle of an *Auto-da-fé*. This was the public burning of distinguished victims and martyrs of less note before the king, his son and sister, an immense crowd of clergy and soldiery, foreign ministers and nobility. A sermon was preached beforehand (as was the custom at an *Auto-da-fé*), the king then drew his sword and swore to maintain the

Inquisition against all heretics, and signed a paper to that effect. On this occasion thirteen people were burned, among them a fine young noble—Carlos de Sessa—who said to Philip as he passed by to the stake: "How can you look on and permit me to be burned?"

Philip replied: "I would carry the wood to burn my own son were he as wicked as you."

Philip's Third Marriage.—This was not the first *Auto-da-fé* held in Spain; one had taken place in May of that year, and soon after Philip's return another was celebrated at Seville, where fifty victims were destroyed by fire. Immediately afterwards his marriage with Isabella of France was solemnised.

The Prince of Orange.—William of Nassau, Prince of Orange, destined to become the strength and director of the Provinces, was of very high and ancient lineage. The Nassau family first appears in distinct existence in the middle of the eleventh century, and it divided into two great branches. The elder branch ascended the Imperial throne in Germany in the person of Adolph of Nassau; while the younger and most illustrious branch retained the modest little sovereignty of Nassau Dillenbourg, but transplanted itself to the Netherlands, where it attained large power and possessions. The ancestors of William the Silent had exercised sovereignty as Dukes of Gueldres as long ago as 400 years before the House of Burgundy had borne rule in the Netherlands.

Henry of Nassau, who inherited the family possessions and titles in Luxembourg, Brabant, Flanders, and Holland, had been the confidential friend of the Emperor Charles V., indeed it was by his influence that the Imperial crown was placed on Charles' head. This Henry of Nassau espoused the sister of Philibert of Orange, and his son René succeeded Philibert in the little Principality of

Orange, and thus it passed to the Nassau family. The title of Orange was of remote antiquity, for in the reign of Charlemagne, Guillaume au Court Nez of Orange had defended the town of Orange against the Saracens. The Principality became a free sovereignty, and had descended through three families in spite of Salic law, those of Orange, Baux, and Chalons. When René of Orange died in battle, he, having no children who could inherit, left his title and estates to his cousin-German, William of Nassau (the son of his uncle William), who thus at the age of eleven became William IX. of Orange. The future was to call this child to a high destiny. His mother, Juliana, was a most noble-minded and pious woman, she had five sons and seven daughters, and was worthy to be the mother of her distinguished sons, William of Orange, Lewis, Adolphus, Henry, and John of Nassau.

Her letters to her sons are most beautiful and touching, urging them in all their trials to rely on the hand of God. Her son William, called so unexpectedly at such an early age to inherit great possessions, was sent to be educated in Brussels. He was a page in Charles the Fifth's household, and the Emperor always recognised his capability and never kept any secrets from him, notwithstanding his youth, and selected him for the highest duties. Before he reached the age of twenty-one, in the absence of the Duke of Savoy, he was appointed General-in-Chief of the army on the French frontier. He had conducted the peace negotiations after St. Quentin with much wisdom, and, as we have seen, he was one of the hostages in France, where he earned the memorable title of the Silent.

Philip had appointed him Chief of the mercenary soldiers left in the Netherlands, much against the will of Orange, who felt that an Inquisition for the Netherlands, more hateful than even that of Spain, had been determined on, since,

as he truly said, "it would need but to look askance at an image to be cast into the flames." He had been ordered "most expressly to correct and extirpate the sects reprobated by our Holy Mother Church, to execute the Edicts of his majesty with absolute rigour," to see that the judges carried out the Edicts *without infraction, alteration, or moderation*, and without respect of persons. In one of his last interviews with Philip, the latter had given him the names of several people who were to be put to death. But Orange, though at this time a Catholic, and having no sympathy for the Reformed faith, was ever noble-hearted, and detested assassinations. Instead of executing Philip's order he gave these persons warning to escape.

William was now in his twenty-seventh year, and a widower, his first wife Anne of Egmont being dead; they had had a son and two daughters, and his letters to his wife show his affection for her. At this time he was disposed for an easy, princely, and joyous life, filled up with banquets, the chase, tournaments, and military duties. He exercised a magnificent hospitality, and so immense was his establishment, that when he had to reduce his expenses, in one day twenty-eight master cooks were dismissed by him. So luxurious was his table that Philip himself wrote to beg for the present of his chief cook. Naturally the prince got into debt from such a style of living, and from the expense attached to holding high office. To give only two instances of this: His salary as General-in-Chief was "not enough to pay the servants in his tent." His residence as a hostage in Paris was very expensive to him, and he received nothing by way of reimbursement. His entertainments to foreigners at the Peace, and two embassies on which he was sent, alone cost him 1,500,000 florins. Yet he was not desperately in debt, and took active measures to free himself from it, while

he had vast revenues, besides large claims on the Royal Treasury. It was recorded of him by a Roman Catholic, and therefore one not likely to give undue praise to the Prince, that "never did an arrogant or indiscreet word fall from his lips ; on no occasion did he manifest anger to his servants, however greatly they might be in fault, but contented himself with admonishing them graciously. . . He was beloved and honoured by the whole community."

Such was William at the beginning of 1560. He was now destined to meet danger in every shape, to live in perpetual snares ; yet his confidence and calm cheerfulness became proverbial. The greatness of his intellect was undoubted, his attainments were considerable, he spoke and wrote well both Latin, French, German, Flemish, and Spanish. Though termed "the Silent," in private life he was the most genial and delightful of companions.

The Bishop of Arras.—Anthony Perronet, Bishop of Arras, afterwards Cardinal Granvelle, was the son of Nicholas Perronet, a man of an obscure family in Burgundy, but who became favourite minister and man of business to Charles V. His son Anthony had risen to be chief of the Consulta (or Secret Council of Three). He it was who governed the Regent Margaret, and, in great measure the Netherlands. He was indeed a trickster of the most detestable kind, a flatterer who could accommodate himself to all people ; chameleon-like, smooth-tongued, deceitful above all things, the meanest of human beings. He professed to serve with equal fervour, "God and the master," the "master," meaning Philip.

Naturally such a man opposed the rights claimed by the Netherlands, the right not to be burned alive if they disbelieved in trans-substantiation ; the right to vote the money of which Philip asked such large sums. It was by the advice of the Bishop of Arras that the Edict of 1550

was re-enacted. He spoke of the people as, "that vile and mischievous animal," feeling the greatest contempt for them. Greedy, clever, and very rich, he was an indefatigable worker, and could dictate half-a-dozen letters at once in half-a-dozen languages, and send the writers away exhausted.

Nobles and People.—The state of the nobles at this period, and that of the people at large, was extremely different. It was Philip's habit to confer high offices without salary; this, added to their princely way of living, plunged the nobles into debt. They drank deeply, and practised gaming to a ruinous degree. But there was an interchange of ideas between the whole world and the people of the Netherlands, consequent on their extended commerce, their activity of character, and love of freedom. The Emperor's Edicts had been endured, but never accepted by them. The martyrs who were tortured in the cause of religion and liberty were obscure men, who yet dared and suffered all that men can dare and suffer in this world for the noblest cause which can inspire humanity—civil and religious freedom. The heroism with which men walked hand in hand to the flames, and women sang a song of triumph, while the grave-digger shovelled earth on their living faces, was a solemn and terrible reality.

The Edict.—This edict so often alluded to, was originally promulgated by the Emperor Charles V., in the year 1550, and immediately after Philip's accession to power, it had been re-enacted by the express advice of the Bishop of Arras. As long since as when Queen Mary of Hungary was Regent, its severity had struck her with such consternation that she had made a journey to Augsburg to see the Emperor and endeavour to get its rigour softened. However, Philip now ordered it to be published every six months in every city and village of the Netherlands, and its

provisions were to be enforced with the utmost rigour. We will here particularise some of its leading provisions : " No one shall print, write, copy, keep, conceal, sell, buy or give in churches, streets, or other places, any book or writing, by Martin Luther, John Calvin, or other heretics, nor in his house hold conventicles, nor be present at any such, in which the adherents of the above-mentioned heretics, teach. . . . Moreover we forbid all lay persons to converse or dispute concerning the Holy Scriptures, openly or secretly, or to read, teach, or expound the Scriptures . . . or to entertain *any of the opinions* of the above-mentioned heretics . . . on pain of being punished in the following manner. The men to be executed with the sword, and the women to be buried alive, if they do *not* persist in their errors ; if they do persist, then they are to be executed by fire ; all their property in both cases being confiscated to the crown. We forbid all persons to lodge, entertain, furnish with food, fire, or clothing, or otherwise to favour any one holden of being a heretic . . . and any one failing to denounce any such, we ordain shall be liable to the above-mentioned punishments . . . "

" If any person being not convicted of heresy, but greatly suspected thereof, *and therefore condemned* by the spiritual judge to abjure such heresy, shall again become suspected, *although it should not appear that he has violated any one of our above-mentioned commands*—nevertheless we do will and ordain that such person shall be considered as relapsed, and as such be punished with loss of life and property without any hope of mitigation of the above-mentioned penalties. Likewise all shall be obliged who know of any place where such heretics keep themselves, to declare them to the authorities on pain of being punished as such heretics themselves would be . . . and . . . to the end that the judges may have no reason under pretext that the

penalties are too great and heavy to punish them (the heretics) less severely . . . we forbid all judges to alter or moderate the penalties in any manner—forbidding any one of whatsoever condition to ask of us, or of any one having authority, to grant pardon, or to present any petition in favour of such heretics . . . on penalty of being declared for ever incapable of civil or military office, and of being arbitrarily punished besides.”

Such was the Edict published and ordered to be enforced with rigour, such the penalties which a man or woman might have to bear for reading the Sermon on the Mount, or for copying a hymn, or venturing to hold an opinion that Luther was not in the wrong in asserting that a monk had no power to sell the right to commit murder and other grave crimes.

The New Bishoprics.—A further danger lay in a Bull now issued by the Pope, to empower the creation of some new Bishoprics in the Netherlands, the nomination to which important offices were subject to confirmation by the king.

CHAPTER IV.

THE CHARTERS OR HAND-VEST.

THE tumult in men's minds arising from the publication of the Edict, and from the appointment of the new bishops, together with the continued presence of the foreign soldiers, mainly occupied the years 1560 and 1561. As far as Charters could make them safe against oppression the Netherlanders were safe, and they appealed to these Charters (called "Hand-vest" because the sovereign made them fast with his hand), which Philip had made even faster than any princes of his house had done. These charters provided (amongst other securities) that "the prince can prosecute no one of his subjects, nor any foreign resident, civilly or criminally, except in the ordinary and open courts of justice." And further, "the prince shall appoint no foreigners to office in Brabant; and should the prince by force or otherwise, violate any of these privileges, the inhabitants of Brabant, after regular protest entered, are discharged of their oaths of allegiance, and as free, independent, and unbound people, may conduct themselves as seems to them best."

Nearly all the provinces possessed privileges as ample. That of Holland declared: "The ancient laws and customs shall remain inviolable; should the prince infringe any of these provisions no one is bound to obey him."

Resistance to the Bishoprics.—Foremost in resisting the erection of the new Bishoprics was the Prince of

Orange. He omitted no remonstrance to the Duchess Regent or to Philip, for he looked on the new Bishoprics as part "of one grand scheme for establishing the cruel Inquisition of Spain."

Anger of the Netherlanders against the Foreign Soldiery: their Withdrawal.—Fourteen months after Philip's promise to withdraw them, the foreign soldiers were still in Holland, and were quartered on Walcheren and Brill towards the close of the year 1560, and the Zelanders became so exasperated that they refused to repair their dykes, and swore to perish by the waves, rather than longer endure the presence of the soldiery. The Prince of Orange refused to continue the command of the mercenaries. After urgent entreaties from the Regent, the foreign soldiers were then at length withdrawn, but the Edicts and the Bishops remained.

Insolence of Granvelle.—The Bishop of Arras, now Cardinal Granvelle, had by this time assumed so much power in the State Council, and behaved with such insolence to the nobility, that Orange and Egmont addressed a joint letter to the King, complaining that they were only consulted on small matters, that momentous affairs were decided in their absence, and yet the Cardinal declared all members of the State Council were responsible for its decisions whether present or absent. They added that it was impossible to form an idea of the Cardinal's insolence, or of the absolute authority he assumed. Philip, who was in close league with the Cardinal, answered this remonstrance with his usual shuffling and evasion.

Second Marriage of Orange.—The marriage of the Prince of Orange with the Princess Anna of Saxony must here be noted. The Prince was now twenty-eight years old, and the Princess was sixteen; she was far from being handsome, and besides was somewhat deformed and

limped, but she was the daughter of the celebrated Elector Maurice, he who had been killed by a musket shot seven years before. The bride was a Lutheran, the Prince a Catholic, yet such marriages were of continual occurrence between princes. Philip would have married even Elizabeth, the Protestant Queen of England. But the Princess Anna was the daughter of a man who had made successful war against Charles V., and it was not till after much opposition that this *mariage de convenance* was fixed to take place at Leipsic, on the 24th of August, 1561. This was so grand a wedding that Orange arrived with 1,000 men in his train, and the reigning Elector, with his guests and attendants in splendid array, rode to meet him at the head of 4,000 attendants.

The Inquisition.—The Inquisition had not been established in the Netherlands before the reign of Charles V., but it had flourished in Spain, where the rack was the Court of Justice. And now in the Netherlands such an Inquisition was planted as made the inquisitors not subject to civil authority, but the civil authority subject to them. Amongst the inquisitors Peter Titelmann was pre-eminent for his savage cruelty. He burned men "for idle words or suspected thoughts, he rarely waited for deeds." The secular Sheriff, Red-Rod as he was called, asked him how he dare go about with but one or two attendants. "Ah, Red-Rod!" said he jocosely, "*you* deal with bad people. *I* have nothing to fear, for I seize only the innocent, who make no resistance, and let themselves be taken like lambs."

A tapestry weaver of Tournay, named Thomas Calberg, was convicted of having copied some hymns; Titelmann had him burned for this. Another man was hacked to death with a rusty sword in presence of his wife, who died of horror on the spot. We can only quote a few

instances out of the many which happened every day. A velvet manufacturer, Bertrand le Blas, went on Christmas Day to the Cathedral of Tournay, and snatched the wafer from the hands of the priest, crying, "Misguided people, do ye take this thing to be Jesus Christ, your Lord and Saviour?" He could have escaped, but did not try to do so. He was put three times to the torture, then gagged with an iron gag, and dragged on a hurdle to the place of execution. Here his right hand and foot were burned and twisted off between hot irons, his tongue torn out by the roots, his arms and legs fastened together behind his back, and he was hung up by an iron chain hooked to the middle of his body, and slowly roasted.

It is impossible to quote at length more cases of torture; they would fill pages. But these things are the history of the Netherlands, and furnish the causes out of which "a great Republic was born, and an ancient tyranny destroyed." The Register of Municipal expenses at Tournay contains the following entry in an old account book. Was ever any bill so horrible! "To Mr Jacques Barra, executioner, for having tortured twice, Jean de Lannoy, ten sous." "To the same for having executed by fire said Lannoy, sixty sous. For having thrown his cinders into the river, eight sous." Thousands were subjected to such treatment; and for what? For not kneeling to a wafer—for praying in their own houses. "The Edicts and the Inquisition are one and the same thing," said the Prince of Orange.

The People's Hatred to Granvelle.—All men now hated the Cardinal; he was looked on as the impersonation of the persecution which was becoming daily more unbearable; he was even believed to have plotted the execution of some of the nobles; all therefore avoided his society and declined his invitations. In the Council he turned his back on Orange and Egmont, retiring to consult with the Duchess apart from them.

Discontent at the State of Affairs.—In May, 1562, a meeting of the Knights of the Fleece took place at Brussels, and afterwards a private and stormy meeting was held at the house of Orange to deliberate on the state of affairs. Granvelle's friends accused Orange of wishing to be appointed Governor of Brabant.

So great was the discontent that the Duchess resolved to send a mission to Spain concerning it. Granvelle, who was in daily secret communication with Philip, misrepresented everything to his master. While he was depriving the nation of even its natural rights, he assured the king that there was a determination to reduce his authority to a cipher. "They wish to reduce your Majesty's authority to so low a point that you can do nothing unless they desire it." "They wish to make your Majesty odious," wrote he, with much more to the same effect. And he would always conclude his base letters with some falsity, thus, "Your Majesty knows that when they (the nobles) do anything for the benefit of your service I am never silent. I hope, however, that this flurry will blow over, and that when Your Majesty comes they will all be found to deserve rewards of merit." He also, in conjunction with Philip and the Regent, tried to make the nobles jealous of each other in order to weaken their influence. Granvelle continually told the King how to act and what to write, and Philip obeyed him to the letter.

Philip received with cordiality the legate sent by Margaret; declared that the Cardinal had never prejudiced him; that it was not the Cardinal who had first thought of appointing the new bishops, who had only been appointed to lead the people back to the true fold; that he did not wish to introduce the Spanish Inquisition into the Netherlands as the one already established worked so well. This was all the result of the mission to Spain. Poor

comfort indeed ! The Inquisition already established was more terrible than that of Spain, and the Bishops, the creatures of Philip, remained.

But it became clear that the government could not be carried on on its present footing. Granvelle or the nobles must yield. Orange decided that he would withdraw from all share in the government or that the Cardinal should fall, and Egmont, Horn, Montigny, and other leading nobles were of his way of thinking. Thus, in March, 1563, Orange, Horn, and Egmont in a letter to Philip, united in saying they could not act with the Cardinal and implored his removal. But the Cardinal wrote to the King to tell him the letter was coming and to instruct him what answer to make. Let us realise the courage it required to put one's name to a document which might lead to death ; yet this Orange resolutely did, and placed himself in the power of a king who never forgave. Philip answered the joint letter briefly, saying they gave no particular reason for what they urged ; would one of them come to Spain and explain matters ? They rightly, one and all, refused to go for such a purpose, as their letter had been sufficiently explanatory, but they addressed instead, a second letter to Philip and to the Duchess : They did not wish to be accusers of the Cardinal, and feeling that the controversy between him and themselves in the State-Council produced no fruit for His Majesty's affairs, they preferred to yield to him, and prayed to be excused serving in the Council.

The Regent now sent her private secretary, a low, mercenary, deceitful man, to Philip. He was to represent that the Duchess had tried every means to accommodate the quarrel between the nobles and the Cardinal, and to say that she felt the continued presence of the latter might cause a revolt. In this emergency Philip sent the letters of Orange, Egmont, and other nobles to the Duke of Alva, and asked his advice.

Alva's Advice.—The Duke replied savagely ; “He recommended that their heads should be taken off, but till this could be done, that the King should dissemble with them.” As to the Cardinal, the Duke advised decidedly that he should *not* be recalled.

Granvelle's Hypocrisy.—The Cardinal himself maintained the attitude of a forgiving Christian, and spoke of the nobles with gentle sorrow. “The king must not be angry with them, as for himself he would continue to serve them whether they would or no ; he would say nothing to prejudice the king's mind,” while at the same time he represented them as spendthrifts, as conspirators, as malcontents, wishing to ruin Philip's authority. He omitted nothing which could injure the character of the leading nobles. “But it is better to calm men's minds than to excite them,” he added deceitfully. And as usual he instructed Philip what answer to give. For the time the Cardinal triumphed ; Orange, Egmont, and Horn no longer attended the Council, but it was plain that a crisis was approaching.

The Fool's Cap Livery.—Meantime towards the close of the year the King's principal financial agent—Baron Grobbendonck—gave a banquet to a distinguished party of nobles, at which the conversation turned on the Cardinal. His pompous display and the gorgeous liveries of his attendants were mocked at, and it was determined to invent a livery as plain as possible, but bearing some symbol to express contempt for Granvelle, and that all present should adopt it. A few days after, Egmont's retainers appeared in a coarse gray livery, having an emblem resembling a monk's cowl or fool's cap and bells embroidered on each sleeve ; the device pointing at the Cardinal. The fool's-cap livery became the rage. The Duchess laughed, but Granvelle immediately wrote to tell the King. Yet the

Regent entreated the nobles not to carry the jest too far, but the most she could get was a change in the device, a bundle of arrows or a wheat sheaf (whatever these might mean) being substituted for the fool's cap, and now the nobles themselves adopted the livery and Egmont dined in it at the Regent's table.

Granvelle's Removal and His End.—Even Philip began to think it best that the Cardinal should leave the Netherlands, and at length he removed him. "I have thought it well for you to leave the country for some days in order to visit your mother," wrote Philip to Granvelle, all the while knowing that he could never return. Finally the Cardinal left Brussels, March the 13th, with great pomp, and the people were delighted to watch his departure. The Duchess, too, was heartily glad to be rid of him. More than a year afterwards Baron Berlaymont said that the nobles detested the Cardinal more than ever, and would eat him alive if they caught him. Weary of his retirement, which he pretended to love, Granvelle at length went to Rome at the close of 1565, but he continued for some years in Philip's employ as Viceroy of Naples, and afterwards took part in public affairs at Madrid. He died in the latter place in 1586, at the age of seventy, nearly twenty-one years after leaving the Netherlands.

CHAPTER V.

THE EFFORTS OF ORANGE TO SECURE LIBERTY FOR HIS COUNTRY.

At first there was great joy after the Cardinal's departure; and Philip wrote friendly letters to Orange, Horn, and Egmont, but there was no law in the land, for the highest dignitaries received bribes greedily, so that the rich could obtain everything, the poor man nothing but stripes and imprisonment. Pardons for the blackest crimes were sold to the highest bidder. Against all this Orange set his brave heart. He wished to gain three things: the abolition of the Edicts, liberty to convoke the States-General, and to suppress the Council of Finance and the Privy Council. He was accused of ambition, and of wishing to reduce Philip's power to that of a Venetian Doge.

The Prince of Orange, now about thirty years old, had become greatly changed by the troubles of his countrymen. Instead of the brilliant, careless grandee he had been at the time of Charles' abdication, he "was becoming careworn in face, thin in figure, sleepless of habit." "They say the prince is very sad," wrote Morillon, the French Ambassador, to Granvelle, "and 'tis easy to read as much in his face. *They say he cannot sleep.*"

Orange was not a favourite with the Duchess, for he could not countenance her secretary, Thomas de Armenteros, who, like the Duchess, was amassing a large private fortune out of public money. This man (the same sent as

envoy to Philip), a simple clerk, had no right to know important affairs, yet the Regent would sit apart, giggling and disputing with him, while state affairs of consequence, with which he ought not to be acquainted, were debated. When business led Orange to the palace, he was sometimes forced to wait an hour whilst the secretary was in private consultation with the Duchess.

The Persecutions.—The scenes of bloodshed and the persecutions continued, and these persecutions were now becoming too horrible even for Romanists. The Burgomasters, Senators, and Council of Bruges (all of the Roman faith) represented to the Regent that Titelmann was daily dragging people from their homes under pretext of heresy, against all law, and often only in revenge for something said against himself, and they begged he might be made to act according to legal form, since he publicly declared he would act only according to his own pleasure. The Four Estates of Flanders also represented these facts in a solemn address to Philip. The Duchess herself was in extreme dread of Titelmann, and he daily insisted on audiences she dared not refuse. But Philip was more than ever determined to expel heresy, and had already despatched orders that the decrees of the Council of Trent should be published and enforced throughout the Netherlands.

Decrees of the Council of Trent.—These decrees related chiefly to the doctrines of religion which were to be taught the people, and to their education. Heretics were to be shut out as far as possible from the pale of humanity, and from heaven. No inn was to receive a heretic, no school to educate a heretic child, and no heretic was to be buried in holy ground. These decrees also contained many provisions which went against the privileges of the King, as well as against the liberties of the people. Thus several of the Lords in Council thought that at least some

exceptions to the decrees should be made if they were published. The Duchess, in great embarrassment, resolved to send Egmont to Spain as Envoy, and he set forth in great state early in January, 1565. Before they parted from Egmont, many of the nobles drew up a paper (signed with their own blood) engaging, on their faith as gentlemen, to take vengeance on the Cardinal, should any evil befall their friend.

The Prince of Orange had previously declared in a long speech delivered before the Regent in Council, that Egmont must now tell the King the whole truth—viz.: that the free Netherlands were determined to vindicate their ancient rights; that the decrees of Trent and the whole machinery of the Inquisition must be abolished; and that His Majesty must be plainly informed of the frightful corruption which existed everywhere.

Egmont arrives in Spain.—Egmont's reception at Madrid was brilliant. Philip rushed to embrace him, made him dine daily at his own table (a rare honour), took him to drive frequently in his own coach, besides loading him with costly presents. Alas! this flattery weakened Egmont, and he hardly spoke of those weighty matters he had been sent to represent.

On his departure, Egmont received a letter of instructions from Philip, telling him what to say to the Duchess. He was to picture the King as overcome with grief at hearing of the increase of heresy, but to say that he would die a thousand deaths rather than permit any change of religion. The Duchess was at once to assemble the bishops and theological doctors under pretence of discussing the Trent affair, but in reality to consider whether there could not be some "new way devised for executing heretics, *not one by which any deduction should be made from their sufferings*" but some way by which all self-glory should be shut out.

Egmont reached Brussels in April, having for travelling companion the young Prince Alexander of Parma, the Duchess' son, of whom more hereafter. Egmont's report to the Council did not inspire much confidence, but no immediate explosion occurred. He represented there that Philip was "all benignity," having nothing at heart so much as the welfare of the Provinces; that he himself would visit them later, would also send large remittances, and would devise some new scheme by which the objections to the present plan of chastising heretics might be overruled.

Philip's determination to continue the Persecutions.—

Fresh letters soon arrived from Spain, showing Philip's determination *not* to relax the persecutions. Orange indignantly declared he could no longer trust the royal word. There was no mercy in the king. The Duchess was unable to pacify the nobles. The Canons of Trent were published, but received with such fierce opposition that the matter came before the Bishops and Doctors convoked by Philip's orders. After sitting for six days, this assembly gave it as their opinion, that no alteration was advisable in the Edicts, which had been working so well for thirty-five years! At the same time, "some persons in respect of their age and quality, might be punished less rigorously than others, some by death, or by galley slavery, some by perpetual banishment or entire confiscation of property."

Men began to whisper that it was better to die once than to live in perpetual dread of death. The inquisitors complained that such was the anger against the Edicts that it was difficult to get officers to act against heretics. Philip gave orders that heretics should therefore be executed at midnight, in their dungeons, by binding their heads between their knees and suffocating them in tubs of water. During

the summer the Duchess wrote to Philip, that all men were so indignant, it was imperative that his instructions concerning the persecutions should be altered. But fresh letters from Philip in November, confirmed all his former decrees, and he wrote to Titelmann and the Inquisitor-general, praising them greatly; also to the Duchess, desiring her to take no account of idle talk; likewise to Egmont, saying that weakness in matters of religion was out of place.

When the contents of these letters became known, great was the consternation in the State Council, and the excitement spread to the people. Placards were posted on the doors of Orange and Egmont, calling on them to be the champions of Liberty. Meanwhile the Privy Council insisted that the King's orders must be carried out, and thereupon, Orange pronounced there was no longer a middle course between obedience and rebellion. The Duchess was terrified, but felt it impossible to disobey her brother, and a proclamation was issued that the Canons of Trent and the Edicts were to be published in every town and village immediately, and at the end of every six months. The cry of the people went up to heaven.

Beginning of the Struggle.—The impending conflict could no longer be mistaken. Ordinary business was almost suspended. The Marquis de Berghen, the younger Count Mansfeld, and the Baron Montigny boldly refused to enforce the Edicts in their governments, whilst other men of eminence openly counselled disobedience.

A Protest made. Brabant declared free of the Inquisition.—The four chief cities of Brabant first came forward in formal denunciation of the wrong, and presented an elaborate remonstrance to the Regent, who referred it to the Council of Brabant. The President of that tribunal, though a creature of Spain, was forced to

admit that on searching the archives of Brabant for precedent, it could not be proved that the Inquisition had ever existed there. Thus Brabant was declared free of the Inquisition. Every night placards continued to be nailed on the doors of great houses, calling on all patriots to strike in defence of liberty, while earnest appeals were thrust into the Duchess' own hands.

Marriage of Prince Alexander of Parma.—Meanwhile a marriage had been arranged between the Duchess' son (who it will be remembered, had travelled from Spain with Egmont) and the Princess Donna Maria of Portugal. We shall hear so much more of the young prince that a few words of him here will not be out of place. In "manner, costume, and conversation," he was thoroughly a Spaniard. His manner must have been particularly attractive, for we are told that when he *did* invite any of the Netherland nobles to his table, he placed them below the salt, on stools without backs, and hardly spoke to them. (My younger readers must understand that the place of honour was *above* the salt.) With great amiability, when his mother was arranging his wedding festivities, he expressed a wish that the fleet which was bringing his bride might sink with all it contained, to the bottom of the sea. However, it arrived in safety, and the marriage took place on the 11th of November, 1565. The following Sunday, the wedding banquet was given in that very hall where ten years before, Charles V. had signified his abdication. This marriage and that of the Baron Montigny to the daughter of Prince d' Espinoy, at which a splendid tournament was held, gave rise to many meetings between the nobles, and opportunity for much exchange of opinion, and they discovered that they thought alike on many important questions. In the midst of the wedding festivities that civil war was kindling of which none foresaw the end.

CHAPTER VI.

THE COMPROMISE.

THE COMPROMISE was the chief thing worthy of note in the beginning of the year 1566. This was a document by which all who signed it pledged themselves to resist the Inquisition, and to defend each other against the consequences. Romanists and Protestants could both sign for the League, or Compromise, as this document set forth that the Leaguers had an honest purpose to maintain the King in his Estate, and would attempt no diminution of his dominions. Sainte Aldegonde, one of the most accomplished men of his age, a man belonging to the ancient nobility, a scholar, orator, poet, linguist and soldier, and a great foe of the Inquisition, was one of the supporters of this League, as was also his friend Louis of Nassau, who was of the same age as himself.

On Parma's wedding day some of the nobles went to listen to a sermon preached in Count Culemburg's house, by a young man named Francis Junius, and after the sermon the nobles held some grave conversation together. It was then resolved that a league should be formed against "the barbarous and violent Inquisition." Of the young preacher, Junius, a word should be said. He was only twenty years of age, of a noble family, and of such courage that on a previous occasion he had preached a sermon on the Reformed Faith at Breda, in a room lighted up by the fires which were burning some heretics in the market-place.

We are sorry to add that Junius himself was ultimately executed.

The Prince of Orange had not been consulted about the League. He had written a forcible letter to the Duchess, in answer to her commands about the publication of the Edicts, and the Canons of Trent, saying, that the hope the people had of freeing themselves from the Inquisition had alone prevented the depopulation of the country, and the stoppage of trade and industry; that now a famine was impending, and there could not be a worse time for the promulgation of the Edicts, and that Philip would lose the affections of the people.

State of Affairs.—Orange well understood that Philip would soon send an armed force to support his authority, and the Prince had already instituted a system of espionage on the actions of the King. The nobles now wrote to the Duchess resigning their posts; she was in despair—and on her part wrote to her brother, saying, that nearly all the Governors of the Provinces had told her they would not help to burn 50,000 Netherlanders. The country was in a frightful state, famine reigned in the land, and so many quitted it that already 30,000 emigrants had settled in England.

The Request.—A new step was resolved on, in March this same year. A Petition, or Request, was drawn up and presented to the Duchess by a number of the Leaguers, many of whom were rash and so wanting in discretion, that Orange was obliged to alter the petition and make it of a gentler tone. The Duchess was soon after informed in Council, that a conspiracy was on foot, and that 35,000 men would make an invasion and plunder the country, unless entire liberty of conscience were granted them. An agitated debate followed and a meeting of nobles was held to consider the matter. Some members of the Council

were for the Duchess refusing to receive the Request. Yet how could the Regent refuse the right of petition to a body of gentlemen, many of whom were related to the highest nobles of the land? She could not assume such arbitrary power, and it was resolved therefore to allow them to deliver their request, ~~unarmed~~ ; a noble, Count Brederode, being chosen to present the petition at the head of three hundred gentlemen.

Brederode had been one of the first to sign the League, and as lineal descendant of the old Sovereign Counts of Holland, in unbroken male descent through five hundred years, he had a better claim by birth to the Netherlands than Philip. Unfortunately, though brave and generous, he was noisy, headstrong, and given to hard drinking. About six o'clock in the evening of the 3rd of April, 1566, the cavalcade of nobles entered Brussels, and on the 5th they assembled in the ducal palace. Brederode made a short speech, disclaiming all idea of sedition, and then read the petition which was filled with professions of loyalty, but declared the danger of a general rebellion, unless the Duchess ordered the proceedings of the Inquisitors to cease, at least till the King was again communicated with, and new ordinances, made by the advice of the States-General, could be drawn up. As the reading went on, Margaret's agitation increased so much that tears rolled down her cheeks. Orange tried to calm her agitation, saying the Leaguers were all loyal gentlemen influenced by an honest desire to save their country.

The Beggars.—It was then that Berlaymont uttered the taunt destined to give the Leaguers the name of 'Beggars.' "What Madam!" cried he, "is it possible your Highness can entertain fears of these *beggars*!" (gueulx).

The answer to the *beggars* given next day was to

this effect. The Duchess would send an envoy to the King to persuade him to grant the Request. She had already begun a plan for moderating the Edicts, meantime she would give orders to all inquisitors to proceed discreetly in their office so that none should have cause to complain. Two days afterwards three hundred guests dined with Count Brederode at a splendid banquet destined to become historical. The company discussed the name fitted for their Confederacy. Should they call themselves 'the Society of Concord?' But Brederode got up and told the company what Berlaymont had called them the other day (Beggars). "They call us beggars! we will accept the name!" cried he, and beckoning to one of his pages to bring him a leathern wallet such as was worn by professional beggars, together with a large wooden bowl (also used by them), he hung the wallet round his neck, and filling the bowl with wine, drank it, crying: "Long live the Beggars!" Each guest did the same, while shouts and roars of laughter shook the walls of the mansion. These *beggars* were hereafter to teach Philip a lesson he did not yet conceive.

Whilst the noise was at its height Orange and Egmont entered the room, and as soon as they appeared other shouts of 'vivent le roi et les gueux!' rang through the banquetting room. But they refused to take seats, and persuaded the party to break up. Immediately after this, doublets and hose of ashen grey were adopted by the company, with short cloaks all of the same colour and coarsest material, common felt hats, and beggar's bowl and pouch. All this was told Philip by some of his spies, and also that Brederode had eaten capons and other meat on Good Friday.

Do my readers think this a small accusation? In that

day eating meat on Good Friday led to the rack, the gibbet, the fire, and to a war which lasted eighty years.

Meantime a rumour had gained ground that the Duchess had ordered the inquisitors to proceed discreetly. The Edicts were to be moderated. But immediately after giving these orders she caused a weaver of Tournay to be burned to death over a slow fire after cutting off his right hand!

The Moderation.—The Moderation (as it was called) contained fifty-three Articles, amounting in substance to this, that repentant criminals were to be beheaded instead of strangled or burned. The result of the *Moderation* was in fact that all persons who discussed religious matters were to be put to death. The indignant people called this 'Moderation' the '*Murderation*.'

The Mission to Spain.—The two nobles chosen as envoys to Philip were Baron Montigny and Marquis Berghen. Both went sorely against their will; neither were ever to return.

The Field Preaching.—Emboldened by late events the Reformers began to hold religious meetings in the light of day. They had numbers and right to give them courage. From one end of the country to the other thousands met in the open air to hear the new doctrines. In June a crowd of nearly eight thousand persons assembled near Ghent to hear the preaching; and as many as six thousand near Tournay, while two days afterwards ten thousand congregated for the same purpose at the same place. In July twenty thousand met for the like teaching on the same spot. They were mostly armed, for the Governor had thundered forth a proclamation warning all, that each man, woman, and child incurred the penalty of death by attending the preaching. The Duchess, too, sent out hundreds of proclamations and ordered the instant

arrest of the preachers. But all classes had now caught the infection, and the crowds of the Reformers outnumbered the Romanists by five to one. The preaching spread through the Walloon provinces to the northern Netherlands.

The first field preaching which took place in the Province of Holland was towards the end of July at a place called Overveen near Harlem. Multitudes encamped on the ground the night before. People deserted the surrounding cities to go to the preaching, and as soon as the gates of Overveen were opened the whole population poured out as by one impulse. The women, of whom there were many, were placed nearest the pulpit, and the services began with the singing of a psalm by all that vast congregation. The preacher, a small, meagre man, formerly a monk, by name Peter Gabriel, kept his hearers entranced by his words during four hours on that hot summer day. When he had concluded his exhortation he departed at once for the place where he was to preach on the morrow, in order to reach which he had to travel all night.

The Duchess ordered the Magistrates of Antwerp to put down these meetings; they replied that it was no longer possible. She knew not what to do, for she had no power to levy troops and was without money; besides, if she could have raised an army, the Reformers now numbered ten to one of the inhabitants.

The Prince of Orange at Antwerp.—As the people of Antwerp earnestly desired the presence of the Prince of Orange, (who was their Governor), and as the Duchess begged him to go to keep peace, he went thither. Half the population, lining the road for miles, poured forth to meet him. Thirty thousand people escorted him into the city. They called him “their father, their only hope.” He was looked upon by all parties, as the only man who

could control the rising revolt. Even Philip wrote to him with his own hand thanking him earnestly for his exertions, and refusing to allow him to resign his offices. But Orange valued such a letter at what it was worth—nothing!

The Prince's own governments of Holland and Zeland needed his presence, but the Duchess would not allow him to leave Antwerp, even for a day. The members of the Compromise, or the "Beggars," held a very wild and riotous meeting at Duffel, this same month. They debated whether, if they gained their petition, they should be contented with what they obtained or ask more concessions, and also if they should not demand some pledge that no vengeance on them should be taken. They wished to engage 4,000 German soldiers, and 40 companies of infantry to defend the Reformers if need arose.

Orange and Egmont met these Leaguers by the Regent's wish, told them that they had made themselves responsible for the public safety as long as the Regent kept her promise, and since she had sent two Envoys to Spain they must wait their return. The nobles replied that the Duchess was playing them false, but if they could be assured there was no design to take vengeance for the past, and if she was willing to take no important measure without the concurrence of Orange, Horn and Egmont, above all if she would convoke the States-General, they would exert themselves to prevent a revolt. They afterwards told the furious Duchess that they could have help both from Germany and from the Provinces.

Destruction of the Churches.—There were hundreds of very beautiful churches in the Netherlands, that of Notre Dame at Antwerp was rich beyond expression in costly decoration and architecture. These, as embodying the religious thought and feeling of centuries, were worthy of most careful preservation. We must now speak of the

circumstances which led to their destruction. Just before the popular outbreak of which we are about to speak, the Duchess had insisted that the Prince of Orange should attend a meeting at Brussels, but he warned her that it would be imprudent for him to leave Antwerp, and that his departure might be the signal for a tumult. "Out of special respect for his person," the inhabitants had consented not to hold religious meetings *within* the city; but, Orange had told the Duchess, it would be impossible long to maintain this concession. In spite of his representations, she desired him to leave.

It was during his absence that the ceremony of the Ommegang took place. This was a religious festival held yearly on the 18th of August, when a colossal image of the Virgin, much dressed out, and borne on people's shoulders, was carried in procession. On this occasion a rabble followed the image, insulting it by mocking words, and the ceremony ended hurriedly. Next morning, a crowd, still jeering at the image, collected before the cathedral. Some shouted "Long live the Beggars!" and commanded the image to join their cry. They then roamed about the cathedral, sneering at the idols and crucifixes. Presently a ragged fellow ascended the pulpit and a riot ensued. The day following a furious tumult began in earnest. The image of the Virgin was dragged forth, and the work of demolition commenced, statues, pictures, ornaments, were battered to pieces. All night long the sack of the churches went on; thirty were wrecked before the morning broke. The contagion of destruction spread like the wind, so that in a few days 400 churches were sacked in Flanders alone. "It was a mere handful of rabble who did the deed," said Orange afterwards.

But it is worthy of special notice, that amidst all this exhibition of popular frenzy, not a man or woman was hurt or

insulted, nor were any of the valuables appropriated by the mob. These rioters, though belonging to the lowest classes of society, left heaps of precious things on the ground, jewellery and gold, and silver plate—and at Tournay the floor of the cathedral was strewn with pearls and precious stones. What they did was done to show hatred of the symbols of that religion from which they had suffered so much.

Alas! the effect of these riots was disastrous to the Reformers. Orange, Egmont, the ministers of the Reformed religion, even Brederode, "the Great Beggar," deplored the image-breaking. Philip was in a frenzy when the news reached him. He tore his beard, crying: "It shall cost them dear! I swear it by the soul of my father!" As for the Duchess, she was intensely terrified, and prepared for flight.

The Accord.—In this alarming state of affairs, it was found necessary to grant liberty of worship in places where it had already been exercised, and articles of agreement were drawn up, which were signed by the Duchess as soon as Louis of Nassau, and fifteen of the Leaguers had signed a pledge to maintain Philip's authority and the public peace, so long as the Duchess was true to her engagement. This important paper was called the Accord, and letters proclaiming its articles and ordering that they should be observed, were despatched to all the Netherland cities. A thrill of joy went through the land; for the people believed that the Inquisition was abolished for ever.

CHAPTER VII.

PHILIP'S DECEITFUL POLICY.

THE ill-fated Envoys to Spain, Berghen and Montigny had been received with apparent cordiality by Philip, and admitted by him to frequent interviews. They told the King that the Netherlands were not to be trodden down like the abject inhabitants of Milan, Naples and Sicily, and such words struck with an unaccustomed sound on Philip's ear, and were afterwards made to lead to a charge of high treason.

When the news of the public preaching arrived in Spain, it created a great ferment. (The Duke of Alva was at the head of Philip's council). The Envoys had been instructed specially to obtain three points: the abolition of the Inquisition, the moderation of the Edicts, and an ample pardon for all that was past. There was much debate on all these questions, but Philip said little. It was the last day of July before he communicated his decision to his sister, about what she had urged so strongly in the beginning of April. He then wrote to say that the pardon she asked might be granted *under certain conditions*; that if the Moderation was still desired a new plan of it might be sent to him, and that the Papal Inquisition might cease, now that the Episcopal Inquisition was securely established. As for the *Pardon*, he summoned a notary, and declared in his presence, that although he had just authorised a pardon, yet, as he had

not done so freely of his own will, he reserved his right to punish all the guilty, and was not bound by his word. Regarding the Moderation, Philip informed the Pope that he had sent orders for a new draft of it to be prepared ; in which the words : "severe punishment of heretics," were to be retained. But this was all to be kept secret. Philip added, that rather than permit the least prejudice to the ancient religion, he would lose a hundred lives if he had so many.

If the Netherlands could have understood Philip's tricky policy, the outbreak on their part would have happened sooner. The King always pretended (while never intending it) that he would shortly go himself to the Provinces to heal all disorders, though in what manner he meant to effect this was never made clear. He wrote to the Duchess, "that a little wholesome deception could do no harm." He was determined never to allow the States-general to assemble, but this prohibition he likewise kept secret.

In Margaret's letters to her brother, she bewailed the necessity which existed for the concessions which she had made, entreated the King to come himself to avenge all injuries upon the ancient Church, the hope of which alone prevented her death. She furnished him also with a tissue of extravagant falsehoods against Orange, Egmont, Horn and a noble named Hoogstraaten, saying that they had declared against God and religion, that Egmont, in league with the Beggars, was levying troops in Germany ; and that Orange firmly intended to make himself master of the Netherlands ; she wrote all this only on hearsay evidence, the evidence of a most untrustworthy and truculent person, the Seigneur de Noircarmes. Philip's anger was deep when he heard of the Image-breaking, but he concealed his real feelings, using words of pretended goodwill.

The Change in Egmont.—It is with sorrow we record the change in Egmont's conduct after his return from Spain. Though he had felt the gracious influence of Orange, yet, being a fervent Romanist, he regarded the Image-breaking as an unpardonable crime. "We must take up arms," he said, "or the Reformers will end by laying down the law for us." He then departed to his government in Flanders, disposed to take summary vengeance on heretics, and he ordered such numerous executions, and his severity and that of his secretary were so great, that Flanders and Artois became filled with the wives and children of suspected thousands, who fled their homes to escape Egmont's wrath.

Attempts to Tranquillize contending Parties.—Orange had gone to Antwerp with the honest intention of arranging a pacification, only to be gained, as he knew, by loyally keeping the Accord. The articles of agreement, drawn up and signed between the heads of the Reformed religion and the Prince, assigned to the Reformers three churches for the exercise of their worship; and stipulated that no disturbances should arise, or taunts be exchanged between the opposite sects. The same kind of religious peace was concluded by the Prince at Utrecht, Amsterdam, and other chief cities within his government. But at the same time, he felt sure that Philip would never forgive the Image-breaking, nor uphold the Accord.

Tournay Subjugated.—In the important city of Tournay, Count Horn was also labouring to establish peace and toleration. Five-sixths of the inhabitants there were Reformers; he therefore published the Accord, giving permission (formally granted by the Duchess) to build meeting-places *outside* the walls. As the bad weather approached, the people clamoured for leave for preaching to take place *within* the city, until the new buildings should be finished.

The Duchess was furious, she had granted the Accord, but only with the determination to break it, and Horn, though doing his best to serve the government, complained bitterly of the position in which he was placed. Indeed, as soon as the government was strong enough to violate the Accord, there was hardly a pretence used in doing so.

Count Horn was now recalled by the Regent, but not before he had given his assent that the Reformers might conduct their religious exercises in the Clothiers' Hall till their Meeting House should be ready; yet, notwithstanding all the concessions which the Reformers had wrung from their opposers, by the close of the year, Tournay was completely subjugated by the Regent's troops under the Seigneur de Noircarmes, who appeared before the gates with eleven companies of troops, giving the Magistrates exactly one hour and a-half to decide whether they would submit to him without a murmur, or have the city burnt to ashes and every one put to the sword. Noircarmes was quite capable of executing this threat to the letter, and had intended to do so, had the inhabitants refused submission.

The Duchess continued her usual deceptive course, writing to Philip that Orange, Horn and Egmont, were about to head the Confederates; that the scheme for dividing the country between them was already arranged, and that a general massacre of Catholics was agreed on. All this time, she used most friendly words to these nobles, and obtained their services by pretences of every kind.

The Resolution taken by Orange.—William the Silent had never been deceived by Philip's letters and promises, and having no choice, after all his efforts, between becoming a tool of tyranny, a rebel, or an exile, he began to think of arming his country for resistance, and he sent an envoy to Egmont representing that Catholics as well as

Protestants would be crushed in one universal conquest as soon as Philip could invade the Provinces.

He set forth how the Duchess had wished to deprive him of his government of Holland, by sending Duke Eric of Saxony to supersede him in it; and he declared he would not remain to witness the desolation of the land, or to fall a victim to tyranny; but if he could rely on Egmont's and Horn's co-operation, he was willing to risk preparations against the armed invasion of the Spaniards. He warned them, besides, that it was incumbent on men so placed, "not to let the grass grow under their feet." Alas! Egmont's course was very different from that of Orange, and no result followed from this appeal.

The Dendermonde Meeting.—An interview took place at Dendermonde about this time, between Orange, Horn, Egmont, Hoogstraaten and Count Louis of Nassau, in which probably some such proposal as the above was discussed. A letter from Montigny to his brother Horn was also read, concerning the recent events in the Netherlands, and Philip's fury thereat. Another letter produced, was probably a forged one, and purported to be from the Spanish envoy in Paris to the Duchess. It alluded to Philip's long-settled hostility to Orange, Horn and Egmont, and implied that it was the King's intention to use and then to destroy them.

The conference lasted only an hour and a-half, and then each of the five nobles rode off in separate directions. From this time Orange was left almost alone in his brave resistance, as Horn determined to retire altogether to his own house in the country, and Egmont resolved that he would be staunch to Philip; finding then no one to understand or support him, knowing that without Egmont's co-operation any effective resistance was impossible, the Prince of Orange resolved that the King should accept his

resignation of the offices he held. But he determined to preserve a watchful attitude, and to employ a spy on Philip's actions. The best informed of the Catholic party believed that if Egmont had declared for the Confederacy, he could have taken the field with 60,000 men, and might have made himself master of the country at a blow. In conjunction with Orange such a force would have been irresistible.

William the Silent wrote an important pamphlet at the close of the year 1566, the last year of peace which any of the Netherlanders then living were to know. In his pamphlet, Orange, with great moderation, urged on the Government the necessity of allowing some degree of religious freedom.

The Confederacy was now scattered, and a reaction had set in, following on the excitement caused by the Request, the Image-breaking, and the Accord. Tournay had been garrisoned, Egmont was obedient, and the Duchess had time to reduce the ancient city of Valenciennes.

Valenciennes.—Pleasantly situated in a valley, strongly fortified, and surrounded with deep moats, the town of Valenciennes was further defended by the Scheldt, which flowed through this city of Hainault, by means of which river all the neighbouring meadows could be laid under water, making the town, as was supposed, unassailable. When therefore summoned to admit a garrison the city refused, and on the 17th of December, 1566, Noircarmes invested it. At first the inhabitants held out bravely, derisively calling Noircarmes and the six officers under him the Seven Sleepers, and making frequent sallies against them. But alas! these soon showed themselves to be awake.

Early in January, 1567, Noircarmes fiercely attacked an undisciplined relieving party of rustics and students, destroy-

ing them at the first charge. A thousand fell, others were hunted into the river; two thousand six hundred were exterminated in one hour. Of another like band who came to the relief of the city not a man escaped, those not slain in the field taking refuge in the church of Watrelot were suffocated or roasted by Noircarmes' men. This was the first result of arms in the field between the Netherland Reformers and the Government, and greatly elated the latter.

Noircarmes now took up a position at a place called St Armand, which commanded the neighbouring country, cutting off all supplies, and laying waste the villages and the land surrounding them. It is impossible to specify all the horrors committed by these soldiers, who for their amusement roasted sick and wounded people over slow fires, and stripped children of their clothes in the midst of winter.

Valenciennes still held out, and to its honour, no Catholic within its walls was either hurt or insulted. The inhabitants appealed for help to the Knights of the Fleece, but in vain. Brederode had attempted a diversion in favour of Valenciennes. He had stationed himself at his town of Viane, where by virtue of his own seignorial rights he quietly removed all emblems of popery, collected many men-at-arms, and was supposed to be revolving vast schemes. The Duchess, as usual, appealed for help to Orange, who was not too much disposed to render it. She constantly disavowed his actions, though done with her consent, and she vilified his character. By his influence and unwearied exertions he had pacified the old Batavian provinces, and men of all ranks were grateful for his labours. The Estates of Holland voted him 50,000 florins in token of gratitude, but he refused the present, though sorely pressed for money.

The New Oath.—A new oath was now demanded by the Government, equal, as Orange declared, to the requirements of the Inquisition, and he refused to take it, although several nobles—viz. : Egmont, Berlaymont, Aerschot and others had already done so. By it, every man bearing the King's commission, was ordered solemnly to pledge himself to obey the orders of the Government everywhere, and against every person without limitation. Once more Orange renounced all his offices, though the Duchess still made efforts to retain his services. In point of fact Philip had already drawn up the Prince's death-warrant at the very time that he continued to reproach "his cousin of Orange" for want of confidence in his friendship.

The New Request.—Brederode now made by letter a new Request to the Duchess, in which the exercise of the Reformed religion was claimed as a right. This was haughtily refused, and Brederode remained in Antwerp collecting reinforcements and raising others in Holland, while boasting of soon being able to take the field with 6,000 men, with whom he intended to relieve Valenciennes and dictate terms of peace. The Duchess, alarmed, allowed Philip de Lannoy, Seigneur de Beauvoir, Commander of her body-guard in Brussels, to attempt the destruction of the rebels. Within a league of Antwerp, de Lannoy distributed arms and instructions to his band.

Meanwhile several boat-loads of rebel Reformers, who were commanded by Marnix de Tholouse, (a young noble still a mere boy, who had left college to fight for the Reformers,) had taken up a position at the little village of Ostrawell, a mile from Antwerp, and about 3,000 men had gathered round them.

This force de Beauvoir suddenly attacked, the result being that hundreds were killed in fight, hundreds drowned, and six or eight hundred more burned in a farm house

whither they fled for refuge. No quarter was given, and the fight and butchery lasted in full view of Antwerp, from daybreak till ten in the morning.

The Beneficial Influence of Orange.—The excitement in Antwerp became intense; vast numbers of Reformers, armed with pikes, lances, arquebuses, sledge-hammers, swords and battle-axes, were determined to rescue their friends in the field. Ten thousand men rose in arms. The Prince of Orange no longer felt bound to the King; but the large population of Antwerp, and the city with all its riches were in his care; so mounting his horse he rode to the Red Gate, and there faced as formidable a mob as any man ever fronted. He was alone—without guards, and was received with howls of fury. His life was in imminent danger; one man levelled an arquebus at his breast, while a voice cried: "Die traitor!" Some hand struck down the weapon, while the undaunted Prince continued to address the crowd. With wonderful authority he persuaded all, except about five hundred, to remain within the gates; warning those who left the city that their blood must be on their own heads. (All these remaining five hundred eventually sought safety within the walls.)

Meantime the tumult in Antwerp was terrible. Again the Prince's courage and wisdom kept pace with the emergency. He summoned the Senate, the Guilds, and other official bodies to meet him, and arranged with them that the keys of the Gates should remain in his own hands and in those of Hoogstraaten; that no foreign garrison should be admitted, that the citizens themselves should have care of the Charters, and that watch should be kept conjointly by them and the troops together.

But the Calvinists now demanded the keys of the city, declaring that they would not be at any man's mercy, and

after a terrible night and day of expectation (for the Calvinists threatened to plunder and destroy the religious houses and those belonging to the wealthy Catholics, and to drive every papist from the town), the Lutherans, to the number of four thousand, took up arms. Thus, when the next morning broke, three distinct armies, Calvinists, Lutherans, Roman Catholics, all burning with excitement and hatred, were encamped within the city.

The Prince saw the horrors which would ensue from a battle between so many combatants pent up within the walls. He alone could save Antwerp. At ten o'clock in the morning he rode into the midst of the fierce Calvinists, and caused to be read to them an Agreement which he himself had drawn up; he then pointed out that a struggle would be hopeless, and most affectionately adjured them to accept his pacification and to join in his cry: "God save the King!" (It was the last time that Orange himself uttered that cry.) The crowd hesitated—and then—unable to resist his influence, shouted: "Vive le Roi!" Antwerp was saved from carnage and tumult. The Calvinists signed the agreement, kind words were exchanged, and by three o'clock in the afternoon the city was profoundly quiet. After three days of dreadful expectancy fifty thousand men disarmed without doing injury to a single person.

That bloodshed was thus averted was due to the illustrious Prince.

Valenciennes Surrenders.—Valenciennes, so long besieged, now trembled to its fall, and finally surrendered; Egmont, at the hazard of his life, directing the batteries in the cannonade against the town. It was on Palm Sunday, the 23rd of March, that the place was forced to capitulate, Noircarmes allowing his soldiers to rob and murder as they would. "For two whole years after there

was scarcely a week in which several citizens were not executed—often numbers at a time.” Such was the testimony of an eye-witness.

Much had depended on the fate of this city. No opposition to Philip’s authority was now offered ; important towns accepted the garrisons imposed on them, even Antwerp did likewise as soon as Orange had left it.

Alva sent to the Netherlands. The Prince resists the new Oath. He leaves the Country.—It was now decided by Philip that Alva should invade the Netherlands, and that the latter should be ruled by the Cabinet of Madrid. The Duchess was enraged at being superseded, but only gained a rebuke for her complaints. After the Prince had appeased the Antwerp tumult he again wrote to the Duchess in answer to her repeated entreaties to him to take the new oath. The case might happen, he said, that he should be ordered to do things contrary to his conscience, against His Majesty’s service and the laws of the country. He now signified his intention to leave the Netherlands. Before he went, however, he tried once more to save Egmont. In this interview—their last—tears fell from the eyes of both, while William threw his arms round his friend, telling him he foresaw too clearly that he (Egmont) would be the bridge over which the Spaniards would pass to destroy the Netherlands.

A few days later, Orange addressed a letter to Philip, once more resigning all his offices, and adding that he should depart to Germany. The Prince left Antwerp, the 11th of April, and went to his family ancestral seat at Dillenburg. Nor did he go thither too soon, since Philip had already given orders to arrest the Prince as soon as possible, and not to let his trial last more than twenty-four hours. Indeed the death of Egmont, Horn, and Orange had been some time since resolved on, Philip having nevertheless

with his accustomed treachery written a friendly letter to Egmont.

The Confederacy broken. Brederode submits.—We must here briefly mention that Brederode, after remaining some time at Viane, and afterwards at Amsterdam, (where he was constantly surrounded by brawlers and gave much annoyance to the Amsterdam Magistrates), finally made submissions to Margaret, who allowed him to keep his revenues subject to Philip's pleasure. He died of disappointment and hard drinking a year later, and his disorderly band of followers dispersed in every direction. The Confederacy was thus broken to pieces.

With the departure of Orange darkness seemed to settle over the land. Suspected people fled. The most industrious and valuable portion of the population departed in such numbers that the Netherlands seemed in danger of becoming the desolate waste they had been before the Christian Era. The new churches were levelled to the ground, and gallows constructed from their timbers. The Regent issued a fresh edict in May, by which, among other provisions, all who sang hymns at the burial of their relations were sentenced to death, as were also those parents who allowed their children to be baptised by any other than the priest. Yet Philip was angry at the clemency of this Edict.

Alva and the Invasion of the Netherlands. Fate of Egmont and Horn. Philip's Baseness.—It had been determined by Philip and his two chief counsellors (the Prince of Eboli Ruy Gomez, and the Duke of Alva) that the Netherland heresy must be conquered by force of arms. Great wealth was expected from this crusade against the rich Netherland cities, and an army of about ten thousand men was easily collected by taking four legions from Naples, Sicily, Sardinia, and Lombardy, their places being filled by fresh levies.

Ferdinando Alvarez de Toledo, Duke of Alva, was now in his sixtieth year, and the most experienced and successful general of Spain. No man had so deeply studied military science, or practised it so continually. From tenderest infancy he had been trained to arms, whilst hatred to the infidel was one of his earliest instincts. At sixteen he had fought his first battle with constancy and brilliant courage in Fontarabia, and from that time had continually combated for Charles V. and for Philip. He had done battle for the Emperor against the Turk, had accompanied Charles V. to Tunis, had been generalissimo in the war against the Smalcaldian league,* had made the passage of the Elbe, been present also at a famous battle (that of Mühlberg) and the disastrous siege of Metz. So much he had done during the Emperor's lifetime, and he had lately fought for Philip, as we have seen, in Italy, reducing town after town, only to be forced to restore them to the Pope, through Philip's bigotry.

As to his character it is told in few and forcible words by the great historian from whose pages this record is composed. "He did not combine a great variety of vices but those which he had were colossal; and he possessed no virtues. . . . His professed eulogists admitted his enormous avarice, while the world has agreed that such an amount of stealth and ferocity, of patient vindictiveness and universal blood-thirstiness were never found in a

* The Treaty of Smalcald or Schmalkand, in Hesse Cassel, was a treaty formed by several Protestant Princes (A.D. 1531) to resist the absolute tyranny of Charles V. in political and religious matters. The chief of these princes were: the Electors of Brandenburg and Saxony (who afterwards deserted this League); the Dukes of Brunswick and Luneburg, the Landgrave of Hesse, the Duke of Pomerania, the Prince of Anhalt, the Count of Mansfelt.

Charles V. set up a League (A.D. 1536) to oppose them, a League which Alva supported at the head of his troops.

savage beast of the forest, and but rarely in a human breast."

He was besides stern and repellant, while he habitually addressed people in the most contemptuous fashion. In appearance he was "tall, thin, erect, with a small head, a long face, a lean yellow cheek, dark, twinkling eyes, a dust-coloured complexion, black, bristling hair, and long sable-silvered beard, descending in two wavy streams upon his breast." Such was the man about to supersede the Duchess, and to lead the invading forces into the Netherlands. These forces were transported to Genoa, thence to the foot of the Alps, from which point they were directed to make their way over Mont Cenis and through Savoy, Burgundy, and Lorraine. Twelve days march carried them through Burgundy, twelve more through Lorraine, and before the middle of August they had reached Thionville on the Luxembourg frontier, and encamped at length on Netherland ground, having performed the difficult journey without opposition.

The Duchess had written other secret letters to her brother begging him, now that she had pacified the country, not to send Alva, whose name was detested everywhere, and she even wrote to Alva himself threatening him, of course without effect, for he knew that Philip, not Margaret, was master of the Netherlands.

"I have tamed people of iron in my day," said he contemptuously, "shall I not easily crush these men of butter?" He received deputations at Thionville from various cities, offering him an unwilling and trembling welcome, and Count Egmont had ridden out to meet him taking him a present of several beautiful horses. But Alva received the Count coldly, remarking to his attendants (as Egmont was announced), "Behold the greatest of all the heretics!" Nevertheless he immediately afterwards dissembled; placed

his arm lovingly round Egmont's neck, and the two rode together into Brussels.

The Duchess, justly angry at being thrust aside after her eight years labours, had at first thought she would not receive Alva, but afterwards consented, on his saying with empty courtesy, "that he placed himself, his guards, his army at her feet." She received him in her bed-chamber, according to her custom, at three in the afternoon, Egmont and other nobles being with her, but she remained standing the whole time of the half hour's visit, which was very stiff and formal, everyone remaining erect.

Alva had brought with him letters from Philip, in which the cities were commanded to receive the soldiers led into the Provinces and enjoining the most implicit obedience to Alva until the king's own arrival. The Duchess wrote other and more indignant letters to Philip, making no secret of her anger, she being almost beside herself with rage, and the inhabitants sympathised with her, for they dreaded the Spanish soldiers and detested Alva. All the foreign merchants deserted the great marts of commerce, and the cities became silent as if the plague had attacked them. Meantime Alva distributed his troops in Brussels, Ghent, Antwerp, and other principal cities; and required the municipal authorities to deliver up the keys of the cities to him. The magistrates humbly remonstrated against this indignity; of course unsuccessfully.

It was the deliberate intention of Philip when he sent the Duke to the Netherlands that all who had at any time opposed his Government in any way or the Inquisition, should be put to death, and also that the Inquisition should be re-established on its first basis, and the Edicts rigorously enforced. This was the scheme to be executed by Alva. It had also been determined at secret meetings, held before the Duke's departure, that all the nobles against whom the

Duchess Margaret had made complaints, especially Orange, Egmont, Horn, and Hoogstraaten should be immediately arrested and brought to chastisement. Also those gentlemen implicated in the Compromise were at once to be proceeded against for high treason, regardless of any pardon promised by the Duchess.

This plan having been mapped out; (in order that Egmont and other distinguished persons might not take alarm and escape) Philip wrote with his own hand an affectionate letter full of confidence to Egmont. Warnings came to the latter from every quarter, and though not without uneasiness, he determined to believe the royal word. But though only forty-six, he had grown prematurely old with anxiety. His hair was white; and he never slept without pistols under his pillow. Still Alva showed him much cordiality, and daily sent him presents of Spanish and Italian fruits. In the same treacherous manner pains were taken to lull the Admiral, Count Horn, into security.

Arrest of Horn and Egmont.—On September the 8th, Egmont received another most significant warning to make good his escape, from a mysterious visitor, but he still remained as confident as before.

The following day one of Alva's sons, Don Ferdinando de Toledo, Grand Prior of the Knights of St John, and a distinguished soldier, gave a magnificent dinner, to which with other guests, Egmont and Horn were invited. The Duke sent his own band to enliven the banquet, and a message to Horn and Egmont begging that they would favour him with their company after dinner, as he wished to consult them about the plan of the citadel which he proposed to erect at Antwerp. During dinner Alva's son, the Grand Prior, who was Egmont's friend and who risked his life to save him, whispered to him;

"Leave instantly! take your fleetest horse and escape without a moment's delay!" Egmont, much troubled, rose and went into the next room, followed by Noircarnes and two other gentlemen, who had observed his agitation. Egmont, in order to account for his perturbation, told them of the mysterious visitor's warning, when Noircarnes exclaimed: "Ah! Count! do not place implicit confidence in a stranger. What will the Duke of Alva and all the Spaniards say of your flight? Will not they say your Excellency has fled from a consciousness of guilt?"

This advice fixed his fate; he returned to table, and at four o'clock when dinner was finished, he, together with Horn and other gentlemen, proceeded to Alva's house. The latter received them with great courtesy, and one of the Duke's engineers, Pietro Urbino, then laid a plan of the proposed citadel of Antwerp on the table, when a warm debate ensued, in which Egmont and all took part.

In a short time Alva left the room on the plea of sudden indisposition. The council lasted till nearly seven o'clock in the evening, and as it broke up Don Sancho d'Avila, Captain of the Duke's guard, requested Egmont to remain behind as he had something to communicate to him. After an insignificant remark or two the Spanish officer told him to surrender his sword. Egmont, taken by surprise, hardly knew what to answer. At this moment the doors of the next apartment were thrown open and Egmont saw himself surrounded by a company of Spanish musqueteers. Then, finding himself entrapped, he gave up his sword, saying bitterly, that it had rendered some service to the King in times past. He was then imprisoned in an upper room, the windows of which were barricaded and the whole place hung with black and lighted with candles. Here he remained a fortnight, attended in strict silence by Spanish soldiers, and not allowed to com-

municate with any of his friends. Count Horn was arrested at the same time and treated in precisely the same manner. On the 23rd of September, both were removed to the Castle of Ghent.

On the day of their imprisonment, two other treacherous arrests were made, viz., that of Egmont's confidential secretary, Bakkerzeel, and that of the rich and influential burgomaster of Antwerp, Antony von Straalen. All Egmont's papers were immediately seized, and Alva wrote a triumphant letter to Philip.

When these arrests were known, the consternation throughout the Netherlands was great. Egmont's distinguished services and his attachment to the Catholic religion had placed him so high that no one could now feel safe. Hatred to the Spaniards increased every hour. When Cardinal Granvelle heard of the arrests he eagerly asked if "*the Taciturn*," as he called Orange, had been taken, adding that if *he* had escaped they had taken nobody, for that his capture would be more valuable than that of every man in the Netherlands. Peter Titelmann, the inquisitor, expressed the same opinion. He, too, eagerly asked if "wise William" had been taken. "Then will our joy be brief," said he. "Woe unto us, for the wrath to come from Germany."

Egmont was to be tried for high-treason; but on what grounds do my readers think? Because Granvelle had told Philip that on the occasion of Count Hoogstraaten's child's baptism, Egmont had written a letter to Orange, in which he said "*that their plots were discovered*, and that they must dissemble while waiting for other circumstances under which to accomplish their designs." He added that the Duchess' Confessor had shewn this letter to the person who told him (Granvelle). Egmont's Secretary was now put to the torture, and all his master's papers thoroughly

investigated, yet the existence of such a letter remained more than doubtful. But on these slight grounds was Egmont accused !

The unfortunate envoys to Spain, Marquis Berghen and Baron Montigny were doomed likewise ; and the Marquis, whether from despair or poison, sickened and died. Feeling his end approach, he sent for the Prince of Eboli, whom he supposed to be his friend, and charged him to tell the man whom he could no longer call his king, that he had been constantly true to him, and that the bitterness of being constantly suspected was a deeper sorrow than could be easily believed ; adding that when he was in his grave his character, too late, would be cleared from the accusations against it.

The wretched hypocrisy of Philip surpasses belief, and also the perfidy of the Prince of Eboli, whom Berghen called his friend. The latter had agreed to hold out false hopes to Berghen of his return to the Netherlands, in case of his recovery, but, if his recovery seemed possible, to prevent his escape ; and if death ensued he undertook to despatch a special messenger to the Netherlands to instruct the Duchess to take possession of the city of Bergen-op-Zoom, and all other property belonging to the Marquis till it was determined whether, even after death, it would be possible to convict him of treason and confiscate his estates. All this was carried out to the letter by Eboli. The Marquis expired three days after he had sent his dying message to Philip ; and before his limbs were cold a messenger was on the way to Brussels to sequester his property, and to arrest (on suspicion of heresy) his young niece and kinsman who were to have been married, and to have inherited Berghen's estates.

The Blood Council.—When Alva wrote to Philip to announce the capture of Counts Horn and Egmont, he

likewise announced his determination to establish a new court for the trial of crimes committed recently during the late troubles and disturbances. This court was first called the Council of Troubles, but it soon acquired its terrible historical name of the Blood Council. It superseded all other courts, and usurped the powers of all others. Before this new and extraordinary tribunal, citizens of every province, municipal bodies, even the Sovereign Estates themselves were compelled to plead, although it violated all laws, charters and privileges, and its very creation was a bold proclamation that those laws were abrogated.

This Blood Council (entirely unsupported as it was by any letters patent from the King), declared its own idea of what constituted treason, and punished with instant death any breach of its eighteen articles. To have delivered or signed any petition against the Inquisition, the new Bishops, or the Edicts, constituted treason ; to have tolerated public preaching ; not to have resisted the image-breaking, or the Request, or to have said that the King did not possess the right to deprive all the provinces of their liberties, or that the Blood Council was bound in any way to respect any laws or charters, was likewise held to be treason. In three months eighteen hundred human beings, some of the most virtuous and of the highest rank in the land, suffered death from its decrees. It was in fact the Duke of Alva's object to compose a body of men who would aid him in condemning people to death for crimes which could *not* be proved, and in setting aside laws which were not to be obeyed, and in this work Viglius aided him well.

It will be remembered that Viglius was a member of the State Council ; he was also President of the Privy Council, and a member of the Secret Committee of the Privy Council called the "Consulta." A man loaded with just contempt, bent only on saving himself, his property and

reputation, and who, while declining the dangerous task of dipping his own fingers into innocent blood, named a list of persons from whom Alva could choose his Blood Council. These Councillors eagerly accepted their dreadful office; amongst them were Noircarmes and Baron Berlaymont, also two Spaniards, of whom we may mention Juan de Vargas, since his name deserves the execration of the civilised world. He executed Alva's work with horrible industry and merriment: to shed blood was to him a pastime.

We will cite one instance of the way in which the men composing the Blood Council carried on their work. One of them, a Fleming, Councillor Hessels, was accustomed to doze away his afternoons at the Council table, and when awakened in order that he might express his opinion of the case on trial, he used to rub his eyes and call out with great energy, though entirely ignorant of the culprit's name or crime, "*Ad patibulum, ad patibulum*" ("To the gallows with him, to the gallows with him!") His wife, troubled at her husband's absorption in his cruel work of murder, more than once told him she hoped that he who was always thinking of the gibbet would not hang on it himself. Her forebodings were one day realised.

It was on the 20th of September that the Blood Council held its first sitting, after which Alva worked seven hours daily at its deadly board. Commissioners were instructed particularly to collect information as to the treason of the following nobles, Orange, Louis Nassau, Brederode, Egmont, Horn, Culemborg, Van den Berg, Berghen, Montigny. Alva sent the cart-loads of information brought him every day against all classes of individuals (which no one had time to read) to the board of Councillors, and they reported to Vargas. If their report had any conclusion except a recommendation to death, Vargas immediately

sent it back for revision, and overwhelmed the reporters with reproaches.

Such being the manner of conducting the so-called trials, we shall not be surprised to find that in every city, village and hamlet in the Netherlands, men, women and children, were murdered daily by the Council. It was found the quickest way to send batches together to burn. Thus, January the 4th, the following year, 84 inhabitants of Valenciennes, on another day 95 persons from different places in Flanders, on another 46 at Malines, and 35 in other localities, were condemned to death. And these doings went on all over the land. On the evening of Shrovetide (a favourite Netherland holiday), numbers of individuals (500) were carried off at one swoop, and immediately executed. Alva had hoped to secure a much larger number, but some escaped.

On one occasion, a man's case was called for trial, and it was found that he had already been executed, also on examination of the papers concerning him it appeared that he had committed no crime. "No matter for that," said Vargas, jocosely, "if he has died innocent it will be all the better for him when he takes his trial in the other world."

"The whole country became a charnel house, the death bell tolled every hour in every village;" there was not a family out of mourning, the spirit of the nation seemed broken. Submission was of no avail, flight had been made impossible (for it had been forbidden): posts in the streets, columns, even the fences in fields and the door posts of private houses were laden with the strangled, burned, or beheaded human bodies. So also were the fruit orchards. Grass began to grow in the streets of cities lately flourishing. Margaret of Parma did not cease to importune her brother to release her from her painful position now that

Alva had superseded her in power, and Philip at last sent her release in the shape of his acceptance of her resignation of the Regency, and bestowed on her a life income of 14,000 ducats. She took her departure into Germany from the Netherlands, the 9th of December, 1567. By the side of the horrors of Alva's rule, Margaret's was looked on with commendation, but it was only the darkness of his cruelty that by contrast made hers seem light.

granted freedom of religion to the Reformers. The Prince replied briefly that as a Knight of the Fleece, a member of the Germanic Empire, a sovereign Prince of France, a citizen of the Netherlands, he rejected Alva's self-constituted court, but he would establish his innocence before competent and righteous judges.

The whole of the Netherlanders condemned to Death.—Events now marched rapidly. Early in the year (the 16th of February, 1568), a sentence of the Inquisition condemned *all the inhabitants* of the Netherlands to death as heretics, excepting only a few named, and a proclamation of Philip's ordered this warrant to be carried into instant execution, without regard to age, sex, or condition. This is probably the shortest and most comprehensive death warrant ever issued. In three lines it condemned 3,000,000 of people to death. Men in the humblest and highest positions were dragged hourly to the stake, and a new gag was invented to prevent the victim haranguing the people as he went to execution. The tongue was screwed into an iron ring and seared with a hot iron. In the bewilderment and misery of the people, a gang of marauders rose up, called "the Wild Beggars," who robbed many religious houses and maltreated priests.

Mock Trial of Horn and Egmont.—Meantime Horn and Egmont were in close confinement, and after two months, Alva began a mock process against them. The accused were required to render replies in person to a long and confused list of questions, cunningly drawn up to entrap them into self-contradiction, all their papers being taken from them. Then for another two months they were left in solitude, when they were required, without an advocate, within five days, to deliver an answer the one to sixty-three, the other to ninety different articles. The rest of the proceedings were managed by the Blood Council,

which as we have seen, was a Council based only on Alva's will, and Egmont and Horn as Knights of the Fleece, both claimed the privilege to be tried by their own order. The Countess Egmont with her eleven children had taken refuge in a convent, and, frantic with despair, had left nothing undone to save her husband.

The Countess Dowager of Horn had made similar efforts. It was all in vain. Philip, writing to Alva, said: "the Emperor, the Dukes of Bavaria and Lorraine, the Duchess and the Duchess Dowager, have written to me many times in the most pressing manner in favour of Counts Horn and Egmont." He added "that he had made no reply to them," and begged Alva "to hasten the trial as fast as possible." To an earnest letter written by the Emperor of Germany himself, the 2nd of March, 1568, in which the Emperor made a last effort to save the illustrious prisoners, Philip replied, that "he would not act differently . . . even if the sky should fall on his head!" One wonders alike at Philip's science and his humanity!

The difficulty of judging and condemning Knights of the Fleece, was soon set aside by a bold declaration that the statutes of the Fleece did not extend to crimes such as those with which the prisoners were charged, and Alva received a special patent from Philip, *ante-dated* seven or eight months, by which the King empowered him to proceed against all persons implicated in the late troubles, particularly against Knights of the Fleece. All law, all privilege, was set aside. It is needless to specify the absurd charges of treason against Horn and Egmont. Nothing was forgotten, not even the fool's cap and the livery.

When, in a few very simple words, he had refuted the charges against him, Count Horn begged the judges to have regard to his deeds and his life of loyal service.

Egmont replied in similar terms. As for trial there was none. The tribunal was illegal, the prisoners without advocates, the government did not prove its evidence, and testimony for the defence was shut out, while sentence was passed before the mass of evidence had time to be so much as read. Both prisoners were so plainly innocent that one Member of the Blood Council, the President of Artois, even addressed an elaborate Memoir to Alva, maintaining that Egmont was entitled to signal reward instead of punishment.

Noble Efforts of the Prince of Orange and the Nassau Family.—Philip, when giving open orders for the arrest of Orange, had kidnapped the Prince's eldest child, a boy studying at the Louvain University, and then thirteen years of age. And now, when all the chances seemed with the Spaniards, when the leading men in the Netherlands were captive or in exile, when the country was terror-stricken, when the Huguenots had made a fatal peace with France—at such a time William the Silent stepped forward to do what he could for his country. He declared it would be death and degradation on his part, to acknowledge the jurisdiction of the infamous Council of Blood. He scorned, he said, to plead his cause before he knew not what base knaves, and appealed to the judgment of the world. The Edicts, the Inquisition, the new Bishops, the persecutions had been the cause of the tumults; and he concluded with a burst of indignation against Philip's conduct to himself, since he had forgotten his services and those of his ancestors. He had robbed him of his son, dearer to him than life, and thus had degraded *himself* even more than he had injured *him*, for he had broken all royal oaths and obligations.

This declaration the Prince published early in the summer of 1568; and he now made the greatest exertions to raise

troops and funds. He was secretly or openly in league with half the sovereigns in Germany, and recruits were daily enlisted without sound of drum. The Prince thought 200,000 crowns necessary for organising an army, and half this sum had been raised by Antwerp and other towns, the other half by individuals. The Prince himself gave 50,000 florins, his brother Louis 10,000, Hoogstraaten 30,000. The Prince now sold all his jewels, plate, and furniture of regal magnificence. He had made a bold but fruitless attempt to take Alva prisoner and secure Brussels, and he now had to concentrate all his energies on the open warfare which commenced.

The Prince's plan was for his army to attack the enemy at three different points, whilst he himself should make a fourth assault. The two first attempts were signally unsuccessful, the third was directed by Louis of Nassau, who entered the west of Frisia with a small body of troops, surprised the castle of Wedde, belonging to Count Aremberg, and advanced to Dam on the Dollart Gulf, where he was joined by his young brother Adolphus, who brought him a small troop of horse.

At Wedde, Dam, and Slochteren, adventurers gathered round his Standard, and on May the 4th Louis issued a summons to the Magistrates of Groningen to send a deputation to confer with him at Dam. By the help of God, he said, he was resolved to extirpate the detestable tyranny of those savage persecutors, who had shed so much Christian blood. He was resolved to lift up the down-trodden privileges, and to protect the fugitive, terror-stricken Christians. If the Magistrates would receive him with friendliness it was well, otherwise, with regret, he must proceed against them as enemies of the common weal.

First Fight between the Patriots and Alva's troops.—The Magistrates, in answer to his appeal, gave Count

Louis a moderate sum of money, and with this small supply he provided for the many adventurers daily flocking round him. But Alva was not idle, and it seemed impossible that Count Louis' rabble army could stand before the Duke's five thousand disciplined men, under Aremberg. Yet Alva warned these not to under-rate their enemy. A sharp skirmish which night-fall ended, terminated the first rencontre between the patriots and Alva's troops, in which twenty or thirty of Louis' men were killed.

Meghem, who had been instructed to join Aremberg with some troops, assured Alva that the war would be over in six days. Knowing that Meghem had not yet joined Aremberg, Count Louis resolved to strike a telling blow for freedom and the Fatherland. At midnight he broke up his camp at Dam, and chose a position three leagues south, on a wooded eminence of commanding strength, the only rising ground in that extent of watery pastures. The country was divided by impassable ditches; and the entrenchments against the ocean proved formidable defences.

Aremberg led his forces along the narrow causeway or forest road, through the swamps, which Count Louis' men had already traversed. Louis and Adolphe, while sitting at dinner in the convent of the "Holy Lion," (a monastery near which they were encamped), were told by a peasant of the enemy's approach.

Behind Count Louis' position was a wood, on the left a hill, before him an extensive swamp, and in front a causeway (which Aremberg must traverse) leading to the Abbey. Count Louis had only three hundred cavalry, and he placed them facing this causeway. The Netherlands pretended to give way at the first fire; the Spaniards rushed hotly forward, and in a moment the whole vanguard plunged into the morass and were help-

lessly struggling in the pools, while the enemy fired on them without even wetting their feet, and the pikemen charged all who were freeing themselves from the morass. At the same time a part of Count Louis' men, under cover of the hill, got round to the rear of Arembert's army; rear and front were thus attacked at once. The day was gained by the Netherlanders, but Count Adolphus was shot on the field. Arembert also fell, covered with wounds; and Meghem, learning his fate, retreated to Groningen.

But though the moral effect of this victory was good, Count Louis' badly paid troops could hardly be kept together, nor had he any sufficient artillery, and he therefore entrenched himself near Groningen.

Alva's wrath was even greater than his surprise. He determined to take the field himself; but before leaving Brussels he destroyed the Culemborg Palace, executed eighteen prisoners of distinction, and had Counts Egmont and Horn moved from Ghent to Brussels and lodged in the "Broodhuis" opposite the town hall; where Alva condemned both to be executed next day by the sword, their heads to be placed on high, in some public place.

Execution of the Counts Egmont and Horn.—The Bishop of Ypres was summoned to communicate to the nobles their doom. With tears and kneeling, the Bishop entreated Alva for delay, and the Countess Egmont, aghast at the rumour, flew to the Duke and fell at his feet, imploring her husband's release. Will it be believed that he re-assured her, telling her her husband would certainly be released on the morrow!

Egmont was roused from sleep to hear his doom, and expressed astonishment rather than dismay. With great composure he wrote both to Philip and Alva, asking the King to have compassion on his poor wife and children,

whom he tenderly loved, and on his servants for the sake of his past services, and he signed himself, "ready to die, this 5th of June 1568." Count Horn likewise received the news of his own approaching death with absolute composure. During the night preparations for the tragedy were made in the great square of Brussels, where Egmont in other days had borne away the prizes of skill and valour. Upon a scaffold covered with black cloth were placed two velvet cushions, two iron spikes, a small table and a silver crucifix ; the executioner being concealed under the scaffold.

Egmont wore a robe of red damask, and a black hat with black and white plumes. Kneeling on one of the cushions he repeated the Lord's Prayer, and kissed the crucifix ; the bishop of Ypres pronounced the blessing, and Egmont having said, "Lord into thy hands I commend my spirit," the executioner suddenly appeared and severed his head at one blow.

A great shudder went through the crowd, and tears fell even from the Spanish soldiery. The French ambassador, peeping from a window, whispered that he had seen that head fall which had twice made France tremble. Tears even appeared on Alva's face ! A dark cloth was quickly thrown over the body as Horn was seen advancing to his doom. He did not kiss the crucifix, but uttering the same words as Egmont submitted his head to the stroke.

The crowd could not be restrained from uttering execrations. The remains of the unfortunate nobles were finally given to their friends for interment, but their heads, it was supposed, were sent to Madrid, that Philip might look on the faces of his dead enemies. No one believed that either of these nobles had committed any crime, and all ascribed their execution to Alva's jealousy.

The Countess Egmont, with her children, remained at

the convent of Cambre, plunged in poverty and the most extreme misery.

Alva takes the Field against Louis of Nassau.—Massacre of the Latter's Troops.—Louis of Nassau had accomplished nothing since his victory for want of funds, and after Egmont's and Horn's execution, Alva himself arrived before Groningen, the 14th of July, to place himself at the head of about 15,000 choice troops. The miserable inhabitants found themselves between two fires, each party demanding contributions from them.

Count Louis' ill-paid, undisciplined army, amounted to from 10,000 to 12,000 men, and unfortunately, after some skirmishing, a large body of them, tempted from their entrenchments, engaged the Spaniards towards evening. A panic suddenly spread among Count Louis' troops; the whole army was soon in retreat, and was routed so completely that Alva believed it to be destroyed. Pursuing their defeated enemies next day, the Spaniards butchered them in droves, notwithstanding Count Louis' distinguished bravery, and his attempt to turn the ocean against the Duke by cutting the dykes. So terrible was the loss on the side of the Netherlanders on this occasion, that 7,000 of their men were slain, whilst only seven of the Spanish troops were destroyed. It was not a battle but a massacre, Count Louis' forces being pent up between the enemy and the Ems, at a place called Jemmingen, near the Dollart.

The killing of the wounded lasted two days, and roads and pastures were covered for three or four leagues with dead bodies. Count Louis himself only escaped by swimming across the Ems, and taking refuge in Germany. As Alva returned to Brussels, the whole sky was red with a constant conflagration of farm-houses and hovels; he spared neither young girls, nor old men and women. At Utrecht he executed an old lady eighty-four years of age,

because her son-in-law had, eighteen months before, given shelter to a preacher for a night. The fine-spirited old lady (whose property Alva desired, and therefore he condemned her), met her death with heroism, and treated her murderers with contempt. She told the executioner that she hoped his sword was sharp enough, as "her old neck was very tough."

Don Carlos.—As Philip is supposed by some to have had his son, Don Carlos, murdered in prison about this time, we mention the report here. Although the fact has never been proved, yet we know that Philip was capable of any crime. Don Carlos, the son of Philip and of his first wife, was a savage, misshapen young man, half lunatic, and so cruel that he would roast animals alive, or wantonly cut off their heads for his amusement. He once forced his bootmaker to eat the boots which he had made (cut up and fried) because they were too small. Don Carlos was himself suspected of a design to murder his father. At any rate he died or was murdered, about this time.

Recommencement of Persecutions.—And now the work of bloodshed recommenced more hotly than ever. Four men of eminence (one the distinguished Burgomaster of Antwerp), were beheaded on Alva's return from Groningen, having previously been so tortured that they could not stand, and were carried, strapped on chairs, to execution. Hundreds of obscure victims suffered tortures and death too horrible for description. Alva hung even the inquisitor, Red-Rod, on the charge that he had suffered some guilty persons to escape, and had executed others without warrant.

During these frightful triumphs Orange had never lost his self-possession, though tyranny was more oppressive than ever; though his friends in Germany grew cold and anxious, and told him his best course "was to wait for

events." "Your highness must sit still, not a soldier shall be levied within the Empire. If you embroil us with Philip it is at your peril."

But the Prince knew what would come of sitting still, nor was he the man to turn away his face from the affliction of the Netherlanders. About this time a great change came over his mind. The Reformation became the sphere of his duty and affection, and the Reformers everywhere his brethren. Yet in an age when the Reformers themselves were bigots, his aim was religious liberty. "Should we obtain power over any city," he wrote, "let the Papists be as much protected as possible. Let them be overcome, not with violence, but with gentlemindedness, and virtuous treatment." He wrote most kindly to his brother Louis after the latter's defeat at Jemmingen, though Louis had conducted the campaign contrary to his advice. To his wife he wrote: "I go to-morrow, but when I shall return or when see you I cannot tell with certainty. . . I see well enough that I am destined to pass this life in misery and labour, with which I am well content, since it pleases the Omnipotent."

In May, 1568, the Emperor Maximilian had formally requested the Prince to desist from any efforts against Philip on pain of incurring the heaviest penalties should he continue such efforts. In August the Prince replied respectfully, but he denounced Alva's tyranny and the arts of Granvelle, saying it was not to be presumed the king had ever intended such cruelties, and it was certain Alva had committed them by his own authority, therefore he hoped His Majesty would now consider his resistance just.

The Prince of Orange issues a Declaration of War against Alva.—The Prince now issued a formal declaration of war against Alva, and addressed an eloquent warning

to the Netherland inhabitants. It was his purpose to restore the freedom they enjoyed before the Burgundian rule. But he paid apparent reverence to the King's authority, assuming that Philip was incapable of the crimes with which Alva was charged ; therefore he appeared before his countrymen, not as a rebel against lawful authority, but in his own capacity of a sovereign prince levying troops against a governor false to his master's orders.

He knew this mask of loyalty would never save him from the block, but it might influence his countrymen to strike for freedom. So he, the prince of an insignificant principality, stood forth to do battle with the most powerful monarch in the world. He announced his intention of expelling the Spaniards for ever from the country. But to accomplish anything so great money was necessary, and only ten or twelve thousand crowns came in instead of the three hundred thousand promised.

Passage of the Meuse. Disastrous Campaign.—Late in September the Prince mustered his army, a force of nearly thirty thousand men, of whom nine thousand were cavalry, near the monastery of Romersdorf in the province of Treves. Lumez, Count de la Marck, a wild partisan (who had sworn not to shave hair or beard till Egmont's death was avenged), joined him at the head of a band of troopers. The Spaniards trembled when they heard that Orange had suddenly passed the Meuse with his whole army on the night of the 4th of October. It was so bold a deed that Alva exclaimed (disbelieving it): "Is the army of the Prince a flock of wild geese, that it can fly over rivers like the Meuse?" For the water was up to the soldiers' necks, and the fame of the achievement spread far and wide.

With banners flying, Orange marched into Brabant, and took up a position within six thousand paces of Alva's

encampment. The city of Maestricht, close by, furnished him with supplies. Orange sent a herald to Alva to propose that all prisoners taken in the ensuing campaign should be exchanged, not executed. For answer Alva hanged the herald as soon as he had dismounted!

This campaign lasted not much more than a month; Alva determining not to risk a battle, as he had everything to fear, and the Prince everything to hope from a general action. Twenty-nine times the Prince changed his encampment; three times he and Alva were within cannon shot; but the country people refused supplies from dread of the Regent, the Prince's troops were mutinous without pay or plunder; winter was approaching; they suffered the most irritating hardships, and their enemy continually avoided them.

The only important action during the campaign resulted in the death of the Prince's great and valued friend Count Hoogstraaten from the effects of an accidental pistol-shot; Orange was also most unfortunate in the loss of about 3,000 of the patriot troops who formed the rear-guard, and were cut to pieces by the Spaniards whilst the main body were crossing the river Geta near Waveren, to join a reinforcement of French Huguenots who came to their help under Count de Genlis. This took place on the 20th of October.

As no city opened its gates to welcome the deliverer, that which Alva hoped came to pass; the Prince's army began to melt away. Orange was now urged to go and fight in France for the French Huguenots, but thither his army would not follow him; they had enlisted for the Netherlands, they declared, and insisted on being led back to Germany. So they were disbanded at Strasburg, the Prince pawning his plate, furniture and camp equipage to pay them, and solemnly engaging to give himself up to

them as a hostage, for the rest of his debt should he return from France alive, and be unable to pay their arrears. Twelve hundred men were willing to follow him to France, so with these, and his brothers Louis and Henry (the latter a lad of eighteen) he set forth to join Condé's banner. Cardinal Granvelle sneered and rejoiced, exclaiming that those must ever fall who would fly higher than they ought, adding, "the Prince would have enough to do in taking care of Madame his wife, if she did not change her temper."

As for Alva he forced the people to rejoice outwardly, to strew flowers in his path, to deck their houses with garlands (though hung with mourning for his cruelties), to ring their merriest peals, and he had a colossal statue reared to himself with a pompous inscription: "To the king's most faithful minister . . . for having chastised rebellion, secured peace and restored religion," with other high sounding words of self-praise. This was placed in the citadel of Antwerp, and remained to disgust the Netherlanders till Alva's successor destroyed it.

The Emperor of Germany had sent his own brother, the Archduke Charles, on a special mission to Spain, on the 21st of October, 1568, to remonstrate strongly with Philip on his conduct to Orange, and on his government of the Netherlands; but the mission ended in smoke as Granvelle had foretold, March, 1569; for during the interval the Queen of Spain had died, and Philip was offered, as his fourth wife, the hand of the Emperor's daughter, the Archduchess Anne of Austria. Thus was the ill success of Orange complete; it was only equalled by his high-souled courage and constancy.

CHAPTER IX.

ALVA'S TYRANNY AND THE NEW TAXES.

ALVA had never relaxed his religious persecutions for a single day, and many are the touching and terrible stories which could be related in connection with them. Alva's spies were everywhere, even beside the dying; who, if they did not depart this life in accordance with the rules of the Church, suffered confiscation of all property, and their bodies were dragged after death to the place of execution. In truth, Alva's tyranny amounted to madness.

He now imposed an arbitrary tax of the hundredth penny (or one pound out of every hundred) to be paid once only, *unless ever again required!* also a tax of the twentieth penny, or five per cent. on every transfer of real estate; and further, a tax of the tenth penny, or ten per cent. upon every article of personal property and article of merchandise, to be paid as often as these changed hands. These two last-mentioned taxes were to be perpetual.

The people were thunderstruck. In the wreck of their happiness they had kept the shadow of one right: the king could impose no tax. Their constitutions prescribed the manner in which taxes were to be obtained, viz., that the king or his stadtholder should appear in person before the Estates and make his request. Alva's new method of taxation struck home to every fireside. It would produce an entire prostration of industry. Of course Philip could not continue to derive wealth from the ruin of his subjects;

but Alva was ignorant enough of statesmanship to believe in his new plan of raising the revenue. There was a cry of despair, while petition after petition poured in upon the government.

The people agreed to pay the hundredth penny, but protested against the perpetual taxes of the tenth and twentieth pennies, at least till the consent of *all* the cities had been obtained. Utrecht alone dared to refuse, but offered a handsome sum of money instead, (200,000 florins). In order to force the consent of the townspeople Alva quartered the rude, insolent soldiers of Lombardy upon them; but they still held out. He then pronounced them guilty of high treason, declared that they had forfeited all rights, charters, and property, and thus was Utrecht deprived of its ancient liberties for daring to defend them.

Wealth amounting to millions was confiscated, and many thousands of the citizens were ruined, and the charters of Utrecht were not restored until after Alva's departure. By the middle of 1569, Alva wrote boastfully to the King that all the provinces had consented to pay the new taxes. His boast, however, was too hasty, for the Estates quickly withdrew the consent wrung from them, and after many negotiations, the Provinces consented to pay 2,000,000 florins for two years; and thus the matter rested for the present.

The Amnesty.—Meantime Alva, aware that he had enemies, and that his cruelty could go no farther, fearing, too, that his credit was on the wane, wrote to Philip to beg to be recalled. "Were your Majesty only pleased to take me from this country," he said, "I should esteem it as great a favour as if your Majesty had given me life." "At present and for the future," he added, "your Majesty will be more strictly obeyed than any of your Predecessors, and *all this has been accomplished without violence.*" And Philip began to consider whether it were not better to

recall him. Even Viglius and Cardinal Granvelle had both urged on the King the necessity of sending a general pardon to the Netherlands, for the Cardinal saw that Alva's cruelty had overshot its mark. Therefore in the year 1570 an amnesty was announced. It was proclaimed with ridiculous pomp, at Antwerp, in the Duke's presence. But the long-expected act of grace was read so that few could hear it, and after all, it pardoned none save the innocent. The exceptions to the pardon took in so many classes, that no individual could escape if it pleased the Government to take his life. The discontent became general. Philip was disappointed, saying, "he had thought it would stop the mouths of many people." On the contrary, it opened them to clamour against being deceived by a pardon, which, when examined, proved to be nothing less than a new act of condemnation against all classes.

Execution of Baron Montigny.—We must here note the execution of the young Envoy to Spain, Baron Montigny, on the 16th of October 1570, four years after his arrival in Madrid, and three years after the death of his companion. The story is so tragic that it must be briefly told. Two years before his execution (when imprisoned in a high tower in Segovia), a band of pilgrims went through the streets singing. Montigny listened, and recognised the Flemish language. These pretended pilgrims had taken this means of warning the prisoner to escape; and letting him know of the death of his brother Count Horn, and of his friend Egmont.

Montigny was guarded by eight soldiers. He succeeded in gaining over one of them, and through him communicated with his friends outside and arranged a plan of escape. They used to exchange letters hidden in loaves of bread, and Montigny also received in this manner a very delicate rope-ladder, and files for sawing his window

bars. At length the whole plan of flight was decided on, horses were ready to take him to San-Sebastian, and a sloop in waiting on which he should embark; when unhappily the soldier who had befriended him gave the daily loaf to some one else to carry to the tower. By mistake, this very loaf was placed in the hands of the Commander of the Castle, who, on breaking it, found the letter. We know that Philip had already determined on Montigny's death, the latter was now accused of the same things as those which had been laid to the charge of Horn and Egmont, and, after a mock trial (carried on in Brussels), he was condemned to be beheaded.

But Philip thought it best that Montigny should *appear* to die of fever; he therefore, by a series of deceptive letters and reports to this effect, made every one believe it except the poor prisoner himself, and those persons commissioned to murder him. Montigny was removed to Simancas, near Valladolid, and there strangled.

The Inundation of 1570.—Towards the end of this year, 1570, another terrible misfortune smote the unhappy Netherlands. An inundation, more tremendous even than that which formed the Zuyder Zee, swept the whole coast from Flanders to Friesland, and the entire peninsula of North Holland was in danger of being engulfed for ever. A violent gale from the north-west had driven the waters of the Atlantic into the German Ocean, and the dykes, taxed beyond their strength, gave way in every direction. The great dyke between Amsterdam and Meyden, called the Diemer-dyke, was broken through in twelve places. Another, termed the "Hand-bos," formed of oaken piles, fastened with metal clumps, moored with iron anchors, and made fast by gravel and granite, snapped like pack thread. Only one dyke, named "the Sleeper," held firm, and prevented the destruction of the country. In Friesland, the

land far and wide, was changed into an angry sea. The destruction of human life, of animals, and of property, was incalculable. This flood occurred on the first and second of November, 1570.

CHAPTER X.

FRESH EFFORTS OF ORANGE.

MEANTIME, William of Orange had been ever watchful. Recalled to the Netherlands in the autumn of 1569, he had re-traversed France in the disguise of a peasant, had crossed the enemy's lines, and had arrived before winter in Germany. The Huguenots had made an accommodation with the court of France after the battle of Montoncour, but this truce was broken by the treacherous massacre of St. Bartholomew.

Louis Nassau remained with the Huguenots, to whom he had become very dear. The French King now held out false hopes of giving assistance in driving the Spaniards from the Netherlands, and friends of the latter thought to induce him to give this promised aid, since he was offered the possibility of re-annexing those rich provinces, wrested from the French Crown by former Spanish sovereigns.

The Beggars of the Sea.—Before his visit to France, Orange had issued commissions to various sea-faring persons, to cruise against Spanish trading ships. These men became the terrible "beggars of the sea," as they were afterwards termed. The Prince enjoined strict discipline on board his vessels, each ship was to carry a minister to preach God's Word, and no one was to be received on board, save "folk of good name and fame," and they were only to do battle against Alva and his adherents,

Orange was constantly informed of the state of affairs in the Netherlands, and kept up a correspondence with leading men in every part of that country. In these letters, he styled himself "Martin Willemzoon," Queen Elizabeth, "Henry Philipzoon," Alva, "Master Powels van Alblas." But never had he been in so forlorn a condition as now. "Orange is plainly perishing," said one of his friends. It was reported that he had died in the battle of Montoncour. "If he really have been taken off, we shall all of us have less cause to tremble," wrote Viglius. But the Prince's courage was unbroken, his modest but lofty spirit never despaired. He wrote to his brother John that he was to strive to raise 100,000 thalers, as the soldiers to whom he owed arrears of pay would probably then be contented, but that he was quite willing to go to Frankfort to give himself up as a hostage to them if necessary. What remained of his plate and furniture was to be sold.

He who was himself a sovereign and had always been surrounded by nobles, pages, and men-at-arms, now cheerfully fulfilled tasks once performed by his grooms and valets. He never forgot any of his friends, and always remembered small kindnesses received from humble persons.

New Dispute about the Tenth and Twentieth Pennies. The Result.—Early in the year, 1571, the dispute about the new taxes which Alva wished to impose, re-commenced more hotly than ever. On the last day of July, Alva issued an order that the tax of the tenth and twentieth pennies should at once be raised.

Immediately the whole country was in an uproar. The merchants suspended business, and the small traders shut up their shops. The people congregated in masses, vowing resistance. Not a farthing was collected. No man saluted Alva as he passed through the streets. Every one, even Viglius, was against him, nor did he find much support even

to make a foray on the coasts of North Holland, and having on the way captured two Spanish Merchantmen, as the wind was contrary they dropped down towards Zeland, and entered the mouth of the Meuse.

The people of Brill were astonished to see so many ships, (there were twenty-four), and as they were not Spanish, wondered whence they came. It happened that a ferryman named Peter Koppolstok, (who was secretly favourable to the Beggars), rowed boldly out to ask why they came, and brought back the false news to the Magistrates of Brill, that there were on board 5,000 men in all !

The Magistrates, who had been summoned to surrender, now determined to fly, and sent two deputies to negotiate with the Beggars, in order to secure time to prepare for flight. These deputies were assured by the Beggars that they only intended to destroy Alva's Government, that life and property would be respected, and two hours were given them to decide whether they would accept the authority of the Prince of Orange. The townspeople employed this interval in effecting their escape, and only about fifty remained in Brill, when the Beggars, (in reality not more than 250 in all), made a bonfire at the North Gate, battered it down with the end of an old mast, took possession of the town, and here laid the foundation of the Dutch Republic !

The news spread with great rapidity. The word *spectacles* in Flemish being *brill*, the wits of Brussels made this couplet :

“ On April Fool's Day,
Duke Alva's *spectacles* were stolen away.”

and a caricature was drawn (and sold everywhere) of De la Marck stealing spectacles off Alva's nose. But it is to the bold William de Blois, Seigneur of Treslong, a noble

whose brother Alva had executed, that the merit of holding Brill is due. De la Marck would have plundered and abandoned it ; but Treslong saw that it could be held, and his earnest entreaties prevailed with De la Marck.

Of course Alva at once sent a force to recapture Brill, but a brave carpenter of the town, axe in hand, swam to the Niewland sluice, and hacked it open, to let the sea pour in and make the approach on the north side impossible. In the meantime Treslong and a patriot named Robol, had with immense daring rowed out to the Spanish ships, set some on fire and cut others adrift. The Spaniards, looking back at their blazing vessels, and the sea cutting off their retreat by land, made haste to escape on board their ships, many men being drowned in their flight.

By a treacherous and most base deceit, the Spanish troops gained permission to march through Rotterdam without halting, which request being granted, they entered the town, and then put every one who offered the least resistance to death, while the women suffered every insult from the hands of these brutal soldiers.

Flushing declares for Orange.—The important town of Flushing, on the island of Walcheren, next declared for Orange. The Governor of the town, the Seigneur de Herpt, excited the townsmen to drive the Spanish garrison from the city. Next day some ships arrived, bringing a force sent by Alva to complete a fortress in this important position, and De Herpt easily persuaded his fellow citizens that there was no hope for them in the future save in resistance. Strange to say, a half-witted fellow was the means of driving the Spaniards away. He offered to go up on the ramparts and discharge two pieces of artillery for a pot of beer. His offer was accepted and carried out, when a sudden panic seized the Spaniards, and the whole fleet was soon out of sight. The inhabitants of Flushing now

communicated with those of Brill, and De la Marck sent two hundred men to their aid. A wild crew they were, grotesquely dressed in the gorgeous vestments seized in derision from the Churches. At Flushing they came upon Alva's chief engineer, Pacheco, who, knowing nothing, found himself, as he stepped on shore, surrounded by a threatening mob. Treslong, who now commanded Flushing, was deeply incensed against this engineer who had built the Antwerp Citadel, and condemned him to be hanged at once. It was difficult to find an executioner—for even a condemned murderer, then lying in the goal, when offered his life as a recompense for performing the office, declared it should never be said that *his* mother had given birth to a hangman. But on being told that the victim was a Spaniard, he consented with alacrity.

We feel sorrow for the fate of one of the most distinguished engineers of his time, and for the atrocious deeds sometimes committed by individuals on the patriot side ; but in the midst of our indignation and regret let us remember that it was the Spaniards who let loose the demons of hatred and persecution, and the inevitable consequence was that violence and bloodshed recoiled on themselves.

Soon after the Prince appointed a trusty officer, Jerome Van't Zeraerts as Lieutenant-Governor over the whole island of Walcheren. A small band of French infantry accompanied Zeraerts, who was afterwards reinforced by a large number of volunteers from England.

CHAPTER XI.

IMPORTANT TOWNS IN HOLLAND AND ZELAND, AND OTHERS IN DIFFERENT PROVINCES, ACCEPT THE RULE OF ORANGE.

THUS Brill and Flushing had shaken off the enemy's rule. Other towns were quick to follow their example. Half the Island of Walcheren threw off Alva's yoke; next Enkhuizen, the key to the Zuyder Zee, the chief arsenal and one of the first trading cities, hung out the banner of Orange on its ramparts. All this was effected by the mariners and burghers, without shedding blood or committing any injury to person or property.

Nearly all the important cities of Holland and Zeland now raised the Prince's standard. We name the following towns which ranged themselves under the government of William the Silent as lawful Stadtholder for Philip: Oudewater, Dort, Harlem, Leyden, Gorcum, Lœwenstein, Gouda, Medenblik, Horn, Alkmaar, Edam, Monnikendam, Purmerende, Veer, as well as Enkhuizen and Flushing. Then followed city after city in Gelderland, Overysse and Utrecht; all the important towns of Friesland,—some without a struggle, some after a short siege.

There was bitter warfare in the island of Walcheren, divided as it was between the two parties, for there the Spaniards had ceased to be regarded as human beings by the islanders; and can we wonder? Prisoners taken on either side were instantly executed, and when they were

too numerous to be hanged they were tied back to back and hurled into the sea.

Story of the Widow and the Burgomaster of Gouda.—

One touching story must here be related. When the town of Gouda revolted the burgomaster fled for his life and entreated a widow to hide him. She led him to a secret closet which served as a pantry. "Shall I be safe there?" he asked. "Oh yes, Sir Burgomaster," replied the widow, "'twas in that very place my husband lay hid when you were searching my house to bring him to the scaffold for his religion. Enter the pantry; I will answer for your safety." Thus nobly did this woman protect the life of the man who had hunted her husband to death!

We shall not be surprised to hear that none of the places we have mentioned were permitted to keep their freedom without a struggle; indeed, all did not succeed in retaining it, though many did, and Harlem, Leyden and Alkmaar, are names to be perpetually honoured. The freed cities chose new magistrates, who were to take an oath of fidelity to Orange as the King's Stadtholder, and to engage to resist Alva, the Inquisition, and the tax of the tenth penny, "to support every man's freedom, to protect widows, orphans, and miserable persons, and to maintain truth and justice." The Prince's written instructions were, "to see that the Word of God was preached, without however suffering any hindrance to the Romish Church in the exercise of its religion."

Capture of Mons by Louis of Nassau.—The Prince was now engaged raising money and troops in Germany, but he directed even the smallest affairs in the Netherlands. His brother, Louis of Nassau, whom all the world supposed to be in France, suddenly arrived at, surprised and captured, the important town of Mons, the capital of Hainault, situated in the midst of a fertile country, and

protected by strong walls, a triple moat, and a citadel. It was besides, from its vicinity to the frontiers of France, doubly important. A painter, a native of Mons, employed by Alva to make maps, was secretly a patriot, and he secured many adherents in the town, and distributed arms which he brought in under the guise of merchandise. Twelve others, his friends, came boldly in dressed as wine merchants, found out at what hour the gates were opened every day, and made their arrangements accordingly. At great risk and with much bravery, they secured the town next morning, and three days later 3,000 infantry arrived to hold the place. Alva refused at first to believe the intelligence, but he at once ordered the investment of the place, and sent 4,000 troops to accomplish it.

But even Alva, wretch as he was, was pierced by the curses of a whole nation, and he entreated Philip to allow his successor at once to relieve him of office. "The hatred which the people bear me because of the chastisement it has been necessary for me to inflict, make all my efforts vain," he wrote.

On the 10th of June, the Duke of Medina Coeli, Alva's immediate successor, with forty sail and 2,000 Spaniards, knowing nothing of the altered state of affairs, arrived off Blankenberg. Suddenly becoming aware of the change, he effected his escape to Sluys, whence he hastened to Brussels, whilst some of his followers made good their flight to Rammekens, and thence to Middleberg. A fleet from Lisbon, also ignorant of what had happened, obeyed the summons to come to anchor, and excepting three or four, all the vessels were taken, laden with money, spices, jewellery and rich merchandise; the largest booty yet seized. One thousand Spanish soldiers were captured, and five hundred thousand gold crowns taken in money, and it was believed this plunder would maintain the war for two years.

Alva is Forced to Commute the Tax of the Tenth Penny.—Meantime Alva had to smother his pride about the tenth penny, and consent to abolish the whole tax on condition that the Estates-General of the Netherlands paid 2,000,000 florins yearly. These Estates he also summoned. But it was too late. The Estates did meet at Dort, but it was at the summons of the Prince, to take measures to renounce Alva's authority.

Orange puts Limits to his own Power.—He takes the Field.—Orange had assembled in Germany an army of 15,000 foot, 700 horse, and 3,000 Netherlanders, and he now entreated the cities of Holland to guarantee pay for them for six months. "Let not a sum of gold be so dear to you that for its sake you will sacrifice your lives, your children, and all your descendants . . . think what a crime you will commit against the Lord God . . . and on the other hand what inexpressible benefits you will confer on your country, if you now help us to rescue that fatherland from the power of Spanish vultures and wolves!" This produced a deep impression. "Truly," wrote Alva a little later, "it almost drives me mad to see the difficulty with which your Majesty's supplies are furnished, and the liberality with which the people place their lives and fortunes at the disposal of this rebel." All seemed determined, rather than pay the tenth penny to Alva, to pay the whole to Orange. The Prince was, in truth, clothed with regal and almost absolute power, but he himself imposed limits to it by his own will, declaring publicly that "he would do and ordain nothing except by the advice of the Estates;" and he directed an oath of fidelity to be taken to them as well as to himself.

He now put his forces into movement, and, after a sharp cannonade, on the 23rd of July, he took the city of Roermond, where he was detained a whole month for want of

money; but on August the 27th he crossed the Meuse, afterwards taking a circuitous route through Diest, Tirlemont, Sichem, Louvain, Mechlin, Termonde, Oudenarde, and Nivelles. Mechlin was one of the chief cities in which he stationed a detachment of troops. Brussels, which refused to join the Prince's side, was too powerful a place to attack; however, other important towns openly ranged themselves under his banner. The Prince continued to advance, when an unexpected and terrible event, which at this time appalled Christian Europe, crushed his hopes.

The Massacre of St. Bartholomew.—This was the massacre of St. Bartholomew. When William the Silent heard of this event, he declared that, "he was as if struck to the earth with the blow of a sledge hammer." Till now he had with reason placed confidence in the help of France, for the King of France had himself written to Louis of Nassau acknowledging his determination to employ all the forces which God had put into his hands to rescue the Netherlands from the oppression under which they were groaning. Admiral Coligny, who corresponded with the Prince of Orange, assured him there was no doubt of the earnestness of the King's intentions in behalf of the Netherlands, and that he himself would join him in a few days at the head of 12,000 infantry and 3,000 cavalry. It was on the 11th of August that Coligny wrote thus to the Prince, and one fortnight afterwards the massacre of the Huguenots took place. We have all read the dreadful story in French and English history. Some accounts state the number of Protestants thus suddenly murdered at 100,000. It is well-known that the French king, who had promised so solemnly to aid Orange, himself shot some of the Huguenots from his palace window in the Louvre as they were trying to cross the Seine.

Philip's Satisfaction at the Massacre.—Philip had not

lent his help in these wholesale murders, but nothing could exceed his satisfaction when he heard of them. "As soon as I came into his presence he began to laugh . . . and to praise your Majesty as deserving your title of most Christian, telling me there was no king worthy to be your Majesty's companion!" So wrote the French Envoy to Charles IX. on the 7th of September. The Court of Rome also rejoiced exceedingly. The joy in the Spanish camp before Mons was unbounded. "Tell the Duke," wrote the French King to his ambassador, speaking of Alva, "that it is most important for the service of his master and of God, that those Frenchmen and others in Mons should be cut to pieces."

So stood affairs when Orange arrived at Péronne, near Alva's entrenchments. But so long as Alva remained in his impregnable camp it was impossible either to attack him or to relieve Mons, and the Duke knew that the Prince's cavalry was superior to his own, and therefore he had no intention of fighting. The French soldiers, inside the town, were in despair; Louis of Nassau desperately ill of fever, Coligny murdered in the St. Bartholomew—no hope of help from France; the troops of Orange mutinous for pay!

Narrow Escape of Orange before Mons.—On the night of the 11th of September, the Prince very narrowly escaped falling into the enemy's hands. Don Frederic de Toledo had hazarded a night attack within the lines of his opponent, had cut down the sentinels, and in the darkness butchered many of his foes. A few of the boldest of Don Frederic's soldiers made for the Prince's tent, where Orange and his guards were in profound sleep. William, on whom his country's fortune depended, would assuredly have been taken prisoner and executed, had not a small spaniel, hearing strange footsteps, barked furiously, and further

roused the Prince by scratching his master's face with his paws. The Prince had but a moment to escape, before his enemies sprang into his tent. His servants were cut down, whilst his two secretaries and his Master of the Horse, though succeeding in mounting, were seized and lost their lives. (Ever after, the Prince kept a dog of the same breed in his bedchamber).

After this disaster he retreated to Péronne and Nivelles, secretly followed by a French assassin in Alva's pay. His troops refused to fight an hour longer, or even to furnish an escort for Count Louis, could the latter be brought out of Mons. So with a heavy heart, the Prince informed his brother of the state of affairs, and advised him to make the best terms he could. Crossing the Rhine at Orsoy, he disbanded his army, and went himself to Holland, the only province which still looked to him as its saviour. "There will I make my sepulchre," wrote he to his brother.

All the cities which had so eagerly raised his standard, now fell away from him.

Count Louis Capitulates Mons. The Result.—Count Louis still lay ill of fever, and as his soldiers refused to hold the city of Mons any longer, and Alva offered very fair conditions, it was impossible for Louis of Nassau to resist making terms. Those of the townspeople who had borne arms against Alva, or who held to the Reformed religion, were permitted to retire with the Count's soldiery. Louis of Nassau, rising from his bed, paid his respects to the victorious generals at their request, they receiving him with an immense show of politeness and esteem.

It had been distinctly agreed, that the inhabitants who had borne arms should be secure ; but in direct violation of all terms, massacre, pillage, outrages of every description,—were practised upon the defenceless inhabitants. Noircarmes, the man who had butchered the inhabitants

of Valenciennes, performed the work which fastens eternal infamy upon his name. Some persons he beheaded, some he burned, some he hanged. Gibbets, on which hung dead bodies, lined the highways. The prosperity of Mons was destroyed. The wretches who did these deeds of blood hid the written records of their crimes in the tower of the Chateau de Naas, and, long after, its fall revealed them.

By the capitulation of Mons, the revolution throughout the Southern Netherlands was at an end, for this city was the key to all the cities of Flanders and Brabant.

Alva Destroys Mechlin.—Alva did not fail to take a horrible revenge on the beautiful city of Mechlin, which, we may remember, refused to admit a garrison of his troops. The property of friend and foe, Calvinist and Papist, was alike destroyed, and so complete was the wreck of the city that "hardly a nail was left standing in the walls." The work went on for three days—all religious houses and churches, as well as dwelling houses, being sacked. Priests' robes, the ornaments of the altars, the rich jewellery on the statues of the Virgin, all were rifled by the Spanish soldiers—and the holy wafers trodden under foot: for a thousandth part of which crimes heretics had been burned by hundreds. Even the beds were torn from under sick and dying women to search them for gold supposed to be concealed there. A rigid Catholic, a member of the Grand Council and a nephew of Granvelle, informed the State Council that the sack of Mechlin had been so horrible that unfortunate mothers had not a morsel of bread for their children who were dying before their eyes. "He could say more," he added, "if his hair did not stand on end, not only at recounting but even at remembering the scene."

In such sadness and horror closed the year 1572.

CHAPTER XII.

THE PASSAGE OF MONDRAGON'S ARMY THROUGH THE SEA. ALVA'S CRUELITIES IN ZUTPHEN AND NAARDEN.

THERE is a part of the Netherlands called the "Drowned Land," and as its name implies, it was *drowned*. The waters of the German Ocean had washed over it and divided it from the dry land, in a great inundation fifty years before the time of which I write. This drowned land separates the island of South Beveland from the mainland, and at low tide the average depth of water covering it was from four to five feet; the bottom was muddy and treacherous, while at high tide the water rose ten feet. Experienced pilots could ford the "drowned land" at low tide in particular places, the water then being breast-high, but sometimes reaching to the shoulder.

Captain Plomaert, a Fleming, devoted to Philip, conceived the idea of leading an army across it in order to reinforce the city of Goes or Tergoes, on the island of South Beveland; for if this place could be held the Spaniards would retain Middleburg, but if they lost Middleburg they would lose Walcheren and Zeland. Captain Plomaert twice made the difficult and dangerous journey of ten miles, and then laid his plan before the Spanish Colonel, Mondragon. To be brief, the latter in person successfully led 3,000 picked men across the submerged path,—they had had to traverse ten miles of sea at midnight, in, at most, six hours. Had they not accom-

of Valenciennes, performed the work which fastens eternal infamy upon his name. Some persons he beheaded, some he burned, some he hanged. Gibbets, on which hung dead bodies, lined the highways. The prosperity of Mons was destroyed. The wretches who did these deeds of blood hid the written records of their crimes in the tower of the Chateau de Naas, and, long after, its fall revealed them.

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plished the passage within that time, the tide would have returned and overwhelmed them for ever.

The news that a Spanish army had risen from the depths of the sea flew before the invading troops, and a panic seized the soldiers under Jerome de't Zeraerts, who commanded for Orange in Walcheren. They fled, hotly pursued, to their ships, and the town of Tergoes was reinforced by the enemy.

Of the cities which had so lately declared for Orange, Zutphen alone had offered a feeble resistance to the entrance of Philip's troops ; to punish which rebellion Alva ordered his son *not to leave a single man alive* in the town and to burn *every* house to the ground. This dreadful order was obeyed almost literally. Some of the citizens were hung up by the feet, and suffered four days and nights of agony ; five hundred were tied two-and-two and drowned in the River Yssel. It is impossible to cite all the horrors committed. The whole country cowered again, except Holland and Zeland. Alva's son was ordered to go to Amsterdam, and from that stand-point to proceed to conquer the rest of the province of Holland. The little city of Naarden, on the coast of the Zuyder Zee, lay in his path ; and it is dreadful to have to recount that after a solemn pledge given that the lives and property of the inhabitants should be safe ; after a sumptuous feast prepared by the citizens had been partaken of by the Spaniards, the population was assembled by the ringing of a bell, in the Gast Huis Church, and immediately fired on, whilst, at the same time, the building was set on fire. The horrors, the chopping with axes, which went on in the streets are indescribable. A hundred who escaped and fled were overtaken, hung up by the feet over the snow-covered ground, and left to perish. The principal burgomaster was tortured by exposing the soles of his feet to a slow fire. He agreed to

pay a large ransom, but hardly had he furnished it, when he was hanged in his own doorway.

The Prince's continued efforts for the mortal struggle with his foe.—William of Orange had but seventy horsemen at his back when he returned to Holland, only seventy out of the 20,000 men he had twice levied in Germany. He now went from city to city, advising with the magistrates and the inhabitants ; for the mortal struggle with the foe was fast approaching. Amongst the sands and thickets where the spirit of freedom was born, it took its last stand for the Netherlands.

In all the province of Holland, Amsterdam alone held out for Alva. Harlem lay between it and North Holland. If Harlem fell, the province would be cut in two, and all further resistance be impossible. The crews of a little fleet, whose ships had been frozen, skated out over the ice, and attacked and killed hundreds of Spaniards near Amsterdam. Scarcely had they returned when a rapid thaw succeeding, set the whole fleet at liberty, and they sailed away untouched by Alva's vengeance. Determined not to be outdone, Alva immediately ordered 7,000 pairs of skates, and made his men learn to use them.

The Siege of Harlem.—Harlem lay in the narrowest part of the narrow isthmus which divides the Zuyder Zee from the German Ocean, the isthmus here being only five miles in width. Westward stretched a fruitful meadow edged by sandy downs, and Amsterdam was but ten miles distant, the Y, traversed by a thread of land, making a causeway between the towns. Harlem was one of the largest and most beautiful, but one of the weakest of Netherland cities. Don Frederic de Toledo invested it with 30,000 men, a peasant having shown the Commander a secret passage across the frozen, flooded meadows. Against this immense army the garrison (which never

numbered more than 4,000) offered at first a force of 1,000 pioneers, 3,000 fighting men, and 300 fighting women. The last was a most efficient body, all of high character, armed with sword, musket and dagger.

Their chief, Kenau Hasselaer, was a widow of distinguished family and unstained reputation. She was forty-seven years of age, and, at the head of her band, shared in many of the most fiercely fought skirmishes within and without the walls. From the spirit of these noble women we may understand that the men were not less determined.

The Prince sent a band of 3,000 or 4,000 men under De La Marck to reinforce Harlem. They were unfortunately routed in a snowstorm by a strong detachment of the enemy, and with this the siege of Harlem began. Don Frederic now directed a sharp cannonade continuously against two of the gates for three days; the walls were much shattered, and to fill the gaps made in them the people brought even the stone statues of the saints from the churches. On the third day Don Frederic ordered the assault. The whole population poured out to defend the walls, assailing the Spaniards with boiling oil, hot coals, heavy stones, and hoops smeared with pitch set on fire. Romero, the Commander of the besieging party, lost an eye, and three or four hundred Spaniards were killed, but only three or four of the townspeople. Don Frederic now gave orders to undermine the place. A second small army sent by the Prince to relieve Harlem was intercepted and almost destroyed by the Spaniards.

Meanwhile, as fast as Don Frederic undermined the town the Harlem garrison countermined. The combatants met daily, killed and fought one another underground. Orange sent into the city by carrier pigeons, letters written on extremely small bits of paper. On January the 28th he despatched a supply of bread and powder, with

four hundred good soldiers, across the Harlem Lake, on one hundred and seventy sledges. During the long winter nights the citizens, old men, little children, and women, had worked at a defence inside another defence called the ravelin, which latter they knew must soon give way; and when, after two or three days' cannonading and a tremendous onset, the ravelin was stormed, and the Spaniards expected to pour into the city, they beheld the new defence in the shape of a half-moon, bristling with cannon. Just then the ravelin, which had been undermined, blew up, carrying into the air all the Spaniards in it. Thus was a second assault gloriously defeated by the townspeople.

It was now resolved to reduce the place by famine; but as the winter wore on the large army surrounding Harlem, weakened by cold and insufficient food, diminished rapidly. But, alas! inside the city food was very scarce, and when spring came supplies could no longer be transported over the ice. Don Frederic had even been driven to think of raising the siege, but Alva wrote to his son that "if *he* fell he would come himself to continue the siege;" that if he (Alva) fell, "Madame, his wife, should replace him."

At the end of February the frost broke up. "Since I came into the world," wrote Alva, "I have never been in such anxiety. If they should succeed in cutting off communication along the dykes, we should have to raise the siege, to surrender hands crossed, or to starve." Orange wrote imploring letters to his friends in England, France, and Germany, and to his brother Louis. As usual, he needed men and money.

One more incident of this warfare must be recounted. There was a part of the land between the Y and the Diemer dyke so narrow that two men could hardly stand on it. In this place, a man named John Haring, of Horn, planted himself alone upon the dyke, and kept 1,000 men

in check, long enough to enable his own party to rally, had they been willing. His daring deed permitted his compatriots to retreat safely; he then plunged into the sea, and unhurt, made good his escape. This incident occurred in an unsuccessful attempt by those on the Prince's side to cut off communication between Amsterdam and the country.

The combats before the walls of Harlem were of daily occurrence. Towards the end of March, the besieged made a brilliant sally, drove in the enemy's outposts, burned three hundred tents, captured seven cannon, nine standards, and many waggon-loads of food, besides killing eight hundred of their opponents. The Duke of Alva wrote to Philip that it was "a war such as never before was seen or heard of in any land on earth."

It was now plain that the life and death struggle would take place on the lake, where the Prince had provided more than a hundred different vessels, and where Alva had increased his fleet. Philip, too, had sent 3,000 veteran soldiers to swell the land force. If the Spaniards overcame the Prince's fleet, Harlem must starve.

At length, on the 28th of May, a fierce hand-to-hand, protracted and decisive battle took place at sea, in which many thousands were killed, and twenty-two ships belonging to the Prince were taken, the Spaniards being victorious. Despair took possession of the Harleimers. As June wore on, men and women fell dead of starvation, and on July the 1st, the besieged consented to a parley.

The Prince, who was doing all that man could do for their relief, had enlisted a body of 5,000 citizens from Delft, Rotterdam, and Gouda, and was himself leading them to relieve Harlem when prevented by their entreaties and representations that, though it was important to succour Harlem, *his* life was of more value than many cities. He

reluctantly consented to let Baron Batenburg lead the troops, and, sad to relate, his plans were discovered by two carrier doves being shot and brought into Don Frederic's camp. The army of relief was waylaid, Batenburg slain, and his troops routed. Don Frederic, believing there was nothing the Harleimers would not do or dare, and fearing they would burn themselves and their houses together, sent a letter, in the name of the German Commander of the besiegers, inviting a surrender, solemnly engaging that no citizen should be punished unless the burghers themselves should consent to it, and that the city should have ample forgiveness.

Surrender of Harlem.—The city surrendered, July the 12th. The massacre (for of course all pledges were broken), began next day. Some of the officers killed themselves to escape their conquerors. Two thousand three hundred human beings were murdered in cold blood.

Such was the memorable Siege of Harlem. But the victory had cost the Spaniards dear. It had required 30,000 of the choicest troops, the loss of 12,000 men, and seven months of time, to conquer one of the weakest cities of Holland, and within five years Spain had spent 25,000,000 of florins for war expenses in the Netherlands.

Orange, sad but undismayed, was able a few days later to inform his brother Louis that the Zelanders had captured the castle of Rammekens on the Isle of Walcheren.

CHAPTER XIII.

INVESTMENT OF ALKMAAR. INCIDENTS OF THE SIEGE. THE SIEGE RAISED.

THE siege and surrender of Harlem were the chief events up to the middle of the year 1573. The next point of attack was the city of Alkmaar in the extreme North of Holland, which city the Prince of Orange had garrisoned with a small body of troops. Alva summoned it to surrender in the middle of July but met with a bold refusal. The grey towers of Egmont Castle rose between the city and the sea. The Spaniards burned the village of Egmont, and then the investment of Alkmaar began on the 21st of August, and the work was completed in a few days so thoroughly that "it was impossible for a sparrow to enter or leave the city unperceived." Sixteen thousand veteran troops formed the besieging force, to oppose which, were only 800 soldiers within the city and 1,300 burghers who bore arms.

"If I take Alkmaar," wrote Alva to Philip, "I am resolved not to leave a single creature alive." Diedrich Sonoy, the Prince's Lieutenant-Governor for North Holland, had the responsibility of defending Alkmaar. The chief hope of the inhabitants lay in the sea, for, by piercing a few dykes, the ocean could be made to fight for them; but it was necessary to obtain the consent of the inhabitants of that part of the country, because all their standing crops would be destroyed; but who could venture out to

obtain this consent? At last a carpenter, Peter van der Mey, undertook to make the perilous attempt, and was entrusted with letters to the Prince and to various leading inhabitants, these letters being enclosed in a hollow walking stick.

As at Harlem, after daily skirmishes, Don Frederic ordered an assault (September 18th). As at Harlem his enemies poured boiling oil, water, pitch, lead, unslacked lime, on the troops, and flung burning hoops among the soldiers. Three times the attack was repulsed with unflinching bravery by the besieged. Not one left his post; each man who fell dropped dead on the spot he was defending. The women and children passed to and fro among the shots, supplying their brothers and fathers with powder and ball. When darkness gathered the Spaniards retired, utterly discomfited, leaving at least a thousand killed, whilst only thirty-seven of the Hollanders perished.

A fresh cannonade was opened on the city next day; but the Spanish soldiers refused to mount the breach, believing the place protected by more than mortal power. Meantime, as Sonoy had opened many of the dykes, the country was becoming partially submerged, and the position of the Spaniards, in consequence, most uncomfortable. Van der Mey had returned on the 26th of September, bringing letters from Orange, giving permission to flood the country in order to save Alkmaar. Van der Mey narrowly escaped falling into the hands of the enemy, and in his efforts to save himself from being made prisoner, he lost the stick in which the letters were concealed. He himself, however, made good his escape, and succeeded in entering Alkmaar, where he made known to his fellow citizens the Prince's permission to open the dykes.

The loss of the stick proved most fortunate for the besieged, for the letters being discovered and read by the

enemy, Don Frederic in this manner became aware of the determination to drown him and his army. Thus threatened with a new and formidable assailant, the ocean, he retired from Alkmaar, on the 8th of October, after having besieged it for seven weeks.

De la Marck had committed such cruelties, that Orange, who had sacrificed his princely fortune, and constantly exposed his life to secure freedom and toleration for *all*, dismissed him from his service, and in conjunction with the Estates of Holland, compelled him the following year (1574) to leave the country. Some years after De la Marck died from the bite of a mad dog.

Philip's further Baseness.—It must not be supposed that Philip committed all his deeds of darkness under the belief that he was doing the will of God ; for he now offered to undo the work of his life, to withdraw the Spaniards from the Netherlands, to tolerate the Reformed religion there, to restore the Prince of Orange "and all his accomplices," to all their possessions and dignities, if only the Imperial crown of Germany, which his father Charles had won, might be conferred on him ; and for this purpose he entered into secret negotiations with the German Princes.

Count Louis renews Negotiations with France.—William of Orange had allowed his brother Louis to renew his negotiations with France, reluctant as he was to do so after the St. Bartholomew Massacre. Still, as Charles IX. professed deep repentance, and averred that the massacre had occurred *in a panic*, Orange felt it would be something if *even now*, the Huguenots in France could be saved further horrors, freedom of conscience be secured to them, and help gained for the Netherlands.

In fact, Charles IX. saw too late what a mistake he had committed by permitting the massacre, as all the Christian

Princes of Europe turned from him in detestation,—most of all did Elizabeth of England. Now there were two things the French King had much at heart, namely, that Elizabeth should marry one of his brothers, the Duc d'Alençon, and that another brother, the Duc d'Anjou, should be King of Poland. If Orange would use his influence to secure these things, he was ready to help Orange. The election to the throne of Poland, (now vacant), lay chiefly with the Protestant party in Poland and Germany; and Orange himself had been thought of as King; his influence, therefore, was great, and the French monarch wished to secure it on own his side.

Louis of Nassau drew up the outline of a treaty which he was willing to negotiate with Charles IX. The latter was at once to make peace with his subjects, and to allow religious freedom, and either to fight for the liberation of the Netherlands, or to furnish 100,000 crowns, every three months, for the war. Should Charles accept these conditions, every city or town in the Netherlands, reconquered from Spain, should be placed under the protection and sceptre of France; but each should be governed by its own citizens, perfect religious liberty granted to all, and all charters sacredly restored. Louis of Nassau himself wrote to the King of France, telling him plainly of his crimes, and reminding him that the soul of man was immortal, and that the thoughts of his mind could not be chained.

Action and Influence of Orange.—Whilst Louis was thus engaged, Orange was in Delft combatting almost singly with Spain. All eyes were turned to him, and what man could do he did. By the spirit he infused into the people, the country was saved from being quite overwhelmed, and by his decision Alkmaar was saved. It was not only battles and sieges he had to direct, but the government of the country, and he was in daily correspondence with the

principal courts of Europe. Alva, having assembled the Estates at Brussels, in September, the Prince thought it a good opportunity to address an appeal to them, to ask how they could endure the tyranny, the murders, the extortions of the Duke of Alva. Had the chief cities remained true to the cause of freedom, the Northern cities would be impregnable. "Whence has Alva the power he boasts? his ships, money, and soldiers? From Netherland people. If the little province of Holland can hold at bay the power of Spain, what could not all the provinces do, if united?" He wrote at the same time to Philip, (and circulated his letter) setting forth the miseries of his fatherland, and again a deep impression was produced on Christendom. It was in the course of October in this year, that the Prince publicly joined the Reformed Church at Dort.

Three days after the happy ending of the siege of Alkmaar, the patriots gained a naval victory on the Zuyder Zee, taking several Spanish ships, and making prisoner the Admiral of the fleet.

Alva's Departure. Arrival of Requesens.—On the 17th of November, 1573, Don Luis de Requesens y Cufiga arrived in Brussels in order to succeed Alva in the Regency; and on the 18th of December, Alva left the Netherlands for ever. He boasted that he had caused 18,600 people to be executed, while the number of those whom he had caused to perish by battle, starvation, siege and massacre, could not be reckoned. He had gained the hatred of all men, and he even feared to travel through France lest he should be shot in his carriage. One last trick of his, of the meanest kind, must be mentioned concerning him. He was enormously in debt, and to cheat his creditors, he caused a proclamation to be made by sound of trumpet, that all people to whom he owed money

must come in person to claim it on a certain day. Then, during the night, he stealthily departed ; his heavy debts remaining mostly unpaid, thus causing the ruin of many families. Of this wholesale murderer, thief and deceiver, we have nothing further to say, except that he afterwards fell into disgrace with Philip, who employed him as a general in Portugal, and that he was seized by a lingering fever and died in 1582.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE NEW GOVERNOR, REQUESENS. ALVA'S PARTING ADVICE.

MEN on all sides now desired peace. War was very costly, and Spain had no money to expend. The new Governor, Requesens, heartily approved Alva's policy, but wrote to Philip that it would be desirable to amuse the people with the idea of a milder scheme. Orange had repeatedly offered to withdraw for ever from the Netherlands if by so doing his absence would hasten peace ; but no patriot in the Netherlands could think of such a proposal without despair. One last piece of advice Alva had given, viz., to burn all the Netherland cities to the ground, except a few which were to be occupied by Spanish troops.

Leyden and Middleburg.—Meantime Louis of Nassau was busily engaged raising an army in Germany in order to relieve Leyden, which was now besieged by the Spaniards. Middleburg was the last town on the Isle of Walcheren which still held out for Philip. There was a good deal of treasure in the place, yet the garrison and townspeople were reduced to eat mice and the most repulsive kinds of food.

The new Governor sent two fleets of seventy-five and thirty ships respectively to relieve this place, whilst Orange (aware of the importance of circumventing Requesens) assembled the officers of his navy on board his own galley, and in brief but earnest language laid before them the importance to the whole country of wresting from the grasp of the Spaniards, Middleburg, the key to all Zeland. Officers

and men with one accord rent the air, declaring they would serve without pay if necessary and die to sustain their Prince and country. Then Orange departed to Delft to arrange his plans for driving the Spaniards from Leyden.

It was opposite Romerswael that the Spanish and Netherland fleets met, and even from the beginning it was plain that the latter would be victorious. They fought only to conquer, and did not even pause to take the gold chains from the necks of the Spaniards. When fifteen ships had been seized and twelve hundred royalists slain, the rest of the enemy's fleet retreated, leaving Middleburg to its fate. Mondragon, who was Philip's Governor there, declared he would set fire to the town and perish rather than yield at discretion. William of Orange granted him honourable conditions of surrender, the citizens who remained in the town being required to take an oath of fidelity to the Prince as Stadtholder for the King, and to pay 300,000 florins.

The Prince enters Middleburg and is acknowledged Stadtholder.—A few days after the Prince entered Middleburg, received the allegiance of the inhabitants, reorganised the Magistracy and restored the ancient constitution. Thus the Spaniards had been successfully driven from Walcheren, while the Hollanders and Zelanders remained masters of the sea-coast.

Battle of Mookerheyde. Siege of Leyden. Count Louis' army defeated. His death.—But the enemy was in Holland, Leyden was closely besieged, and communication between the chief cities had become well-nigh impossible. The Hollanders, though at home on the water, had not yet gained sufficient experience to enable them to encounter successfully the veteran soldiers of Spain in the field.

According to the instructions of the Prince, Louis of

Nassau had been actively engaged in raising troops and supplies in Germany, with the intention of leading an army between Harlem and Leyden and forcing the Spaniards to fight at a disadvantage; and towards the end of February, Louis and two of his brothers crossed the Rhine in a heavy snow-storm with a small army, and at the close of the month encamped within four miles of Maestricht on the opposite side of the river Meuse. Orange had raised 6,000 infantry, and sent word to his brother to join him in the Isle of Bommel. But one thousand of these mercenary troops deserted almost immediately, while the state of the river, beset with ice yet not frozen, prevented the passage of the army. The enemy carried off the boats, and mustered in large force on the other side of the river.

It was not till April that Louis (after often changing his encampment) was able to move forward towards Nimeguen, between the rivers Rhine and Meuse. Avila, the Spanish Commander, followed rapidly, and crossed the Meuse with his whole army by a bridge of boats, so that Count Louis found the enemy facing him at a village called Mook, near Cleves. In that narrow space between the rivers, (the Rhine is here called the Waal), Louis, whose troops were ripe for mutiny, had to fight unaided. A fierce battle ended in the defeat of Count Louis' army. Finding the day lost, he and his brother Henry of Nassau made a final and desperate charge, in which they fell, and this was the last which was ever known of these brave and noble brothers. Of the defeated army, those not slain in battle were drowned in the marshes or burned in the farm houses to which they fled. No one has ever known exactly in which of these ways the patriot princes lost their lives.

This disastrous battle was called the battle of Mookerheyde. But for the floating ice Count Louis would have

surprised Maestricht,—but for the mutiny of his mercenary German troops he might have defeated Avila. His short life had been crowded with daring and noble deeds. All who knew, loved him. His mother always called him ‘her heart’s cherished Louis.’ Three of this noble lady’s children, the Counts Adolphus, Louis, and Henry had now perished in the struggle for freedom. Count John, another brother, had gone to Cologne to obtain a supply of money for the mutinous troops, and so was spared to do much more for his country. The Prince of Orange passed days of intense anxiety, writing letter after letter to his brother Louis whom he tenderly loved, and whom he was never more to see.

Mutiny of Spanish Troops.—A great mutiny broke out among the Spanish troops after this victory. Three years’ pay was due to them. They were accustomed to mutiny after a victory, and then to take possession of a city and compel the trembling citizens to feed them on the best of everything—capons and pheasants, hares and rabbits, spices and sweetmeats, wines and fruit, and sometimes they even washed their horses’ hoofs in wine.

After the battle of Mookerheyde, the Spanish troops mutinied to a man, and this time seized the capital, Antwerp, and demanded not only a large sum of money but a solemn promise of pardon from the new Regent, Requesens. Whilst waiting till these conditions should be granted them, they ate and drank merrily, and in the end got all they asked, being paid either in money or cloth, silks or satins. They then held a great feast, and as thoughtless as children, dressed themselves in some of the beautiful brocades they had just received. Whilst their mirth was at the height the boom of cannon was heard, and arrayed as they were, they had to hurry to the dykes.

The patriot, Admiral Boisot, had sailed up the Scheldt

determined to destroy the fleet at Antwerp ; and meeting twenty-two vessels under the command of Vice-Admiral Haemstede, after a short action, was completely victorious, taking the Admiral prisoner, and burning or sinking fourteen of his ships. The mercenary soldiers, summoned from their feast, were at too great a distance to retaliate, and after this signal victory Admiral Boisot retired in safety down the river.

CHAPTER XV.

SIEGE OF LEYDEN CONTINUED.

LEYDEN had been besieged from October the 31st, 1573, to the 21st March, 1574, when the soldiers had hurried away to defeat Count Louis' army. Now, however, they re-appeared to continue the siege.

Leyden was one of the most beautiful cities in the Netherlands, situated amidst broad and smiling pastures, gardens and orchards ; and the town was intersected by watery streets, artificial currents of the Rhine crossed by stone bridges, and shaded by willow, lime, and poplar trees. A ruined, ancient tower was built on an elevation in the midst of the city, a tower from which many eyes watched anxiously during the approaching summer for the ocean to come rolling in over the land.

A force of 8,000 men invested the city, a force which was daily increased ; while within the walls there were only five companies of the burgher guard, and a small body of freebooters. The military Commandant of Leyden was a gentleman of distinguished family, John Van der Does. The Prince of Orange, though sorely stricken and alone since the death of his brothers, hastened to encourage the citizens. France cared little for the Netherlands since Louis of Nassau's defeat and loss, whilst the English Government was colder and more haughty than ever.

The Pardon.—Just at this moment Philip thought fit to publish his long-talked-of "*Pardon*" to the Netherlanders,

by which he invited all his erring subjects to receive full forgiveness of the past on condition of throwing themselves into the bosom of the Romish Church. No one in Holland took advantage of this "*Pardon*" except two persons, one a brewer of Utrecht, the other the son of a pedlar of Leyden.

The Prince conceives a Scheme to save Leyden.—His Illness, Recovery, and active Operations.—The Prince's forces were encamped at Delft and Rotterdam, and he had beaten off the Spaniards when they attempted to take an important fortress between these two towns. He had long been convinced that nothing could save Leyden but breaking the dykes and letting the ocean in upon the enemy. Leyden was not on the sea, but he could send the sea to Leyden. "Better a drowned land than a lost land," cried the patriots, moved by his impassioned eloquence. The damage would be enormous, but since the destruction of Count Louis' army there was no sufficient land force to beat back the foe. The Estates voted a monthly sum for this necessary work of destruction, and a large amount was also contributed by the ladies of the country, who freely gave their plate and jewellery and costly furniture to further the design.

But on the 21st of August the citizens of Leyden addressed a letter to Orange, saying that they had fulfilled their promise to hold out three months; that their malt cake would last only four days more, and after that time they must starve. Alas! the Prince lay ill of a fever at Rotterdam, a fever induced by sorrow and anxiety. Still he dictated a reply from his sick bed, telling them that the dykes were all pierced and the water rising. Yet day after day the citizens watched in vain for the ocean. The country people and the "Glippers" (Netherlanders on Philip's side) ridiculed the idea that the sea could ever

penetrate as far as Leyden. The Prince's fever had by this time reached its height, increased by a rumour that Leyden had fallen ; but from the hour that this rumour was contradicted he began to mend, and immediately resumed measures for the relief of the town.

The distance from Leyden to the outer dyke was fifteen miles, and over this land the ocean was already let in, so that a flotilla sailed with ease to within five miles of the city. At this point another strong dyke, the Land-Scheiding, arrested it. To enable the fleet to sail on, it was necessary to break through this and some other formidable inner dykes which kept back the ocean.

Upon the intervening territory stood many villages and a chain of sixty-two forts—the latter held by Philip's veteran troops. The Prince had given strict orders to seize the Land-Scheiding, a feat which was performed successfully. On the night of the 10th of September, (many hundreds of Spaniards having been slain), Admiral Boisot sailed through the gaps of the broken dyke, but found to his surprise that another long dyke called the "Green-way," three-quarters of a mile further inland, rose to oppose his passage. He promptly took possession of this also, but again was disappointed, for a fresh-water lake into which he expected to float, could, he found, only be reached through a deep canal, and the sea which had floated him thus far became too shallow for his ships. The canal was deep enough, but it was defended by a bridge strongly occupied by the enemy, who also lined the canal on each side. Nevertheless the bold Admiral tried to force his way through, but found it impossible.

A week had now elapsed since the great dyke was pierced, and still the fleet sent by Holland lay motionless, having only advanced two miles in that time ; when the wind changed, the flotilla was carried on, and some

fugitives guided Boisot by a *detour* to a low dyke, so that thus he could avoid the bridge and the lake. As the fleet advanced the Spaniards were driven back into a narrower circle towards Leyden. But suddenly the wind veered again, and once more the ships lay motionless, day after day, upon the shallow waters. At length the Prince, rising from his sick bed, arrived on board to give final directions, and his presence diffused universal joy. He reconnoitred the whole ground, and gave orders for the destruction of one last barrier called the "Kirk-way."

Leyden Saved.—Meantime Leyden was at its last gasp. Leaves were stripped from the trees for food; women dropped dead in the streets from starvation. Sometimes the watchmen going their rounds found a whole family dead,—father, mother, children. A disease something like the plague followed on famine; yet the town, sublime in its despair, never even thought of surrender. A few murmured; the stout burgomaster told them to take his body to appease their hunger, but not to expect surrender while he remained alive—and they, inspired anew, took a new oath of fidelity to the cause of freedom. From the ramparts they hurled taunts at their enemy, declaring that when the last hour came they would all perish together by fire. "As well can the Prince of Orange pluck stars from the sky as bring the ocean to Leyden," shouted back the Spaniards.

But a tempest came to the relief of the besieged, and a violent wind piled the sea upon the land, and forward rode the Netherland fleet in the midst of storm and darkness. The Kirk-way had been broken through, and the fleet rowed on over the black waste of waters. Then a fierce midnight battle took place among the flooded orchards and farm-houses, where the enemy's vessels were soon sunk and their crews drowned.

Two obstacles still lay in the path of the Zelanders—the

strong forts of Zoeterwoude and Lammen, both well supplied with soldiers and cannon. But the Spaniards, seized with panic, fled from Zoeterwoude, and many were drowned as they fled. Not less than a thousand perished. This fortress was immediately seized and set on fire by the patriots, a few strokes of the oar then brought them to Lammen, which swarmed with soldiers and bristled with artillery, and was so strong that it seemed impossible either to pass under its guns or to carry it by storm.

So great was this obstacle that the brave Boisot wrote despondently to Orange. Night descended, pitch dark, upon his terrible anxiety and the despair of Leyden, a night broken in upon by strange sights and sounds. Lights were seen moving from the fort across the waste of waters; and in the dead of night, one of the walls of the city fell with a loud crash. Day broke after a feverish night, and Boisot prepared to assault Lammen, but a death-like stillness prevailed. What could have happened? Could the Spaniards, after all, have taken Leyden in the night?

Suddenly a man was seen wading breast-high through the water, while a boy was observed waving his cap from the fort. The Spaniards had fled in the darkness! and the only person who had seen them retreating was the lad then making signs of triumph from the fortress. The noise of the falling city wall had increased the terror of their flight, and they had retired at the very moment when they might have been conquerors!

Leyden was saved. The starving and heroic citizens repaired at once in a body to return thanks to God, but in the midst of singing the hymn of praise it suddenly came to an end, for all the multitude were weeping.

Boisot now despatched to the Prince of Orange (who was at Delft) a very different letter from the one he had sent a few hours before. The Prince was at church when

the happy intelligence of the deliverance of Leyden reached him, and as soon as the sermon was ended, he handed the note to the minister to be read to the congregation. After so many sufferings Orange was indeed rejoiced! At the beginning of the siege he had said, "So long as the poor inhabitants here, though deserted by all the world, hold firm, it will cost the Spaniards half Spain in money and men, before they can make an end of us." Leyden was relieved on the 3rd of October.

Next day the wind again changed, and the ocean rolled back, leaving the land bare. The work of re-constructing the dykes immediately began. To celebrate this great deliverance, and in gratitude for the heroism displayed by the inhabitants, it was resolved to establish a university within the walls of Leyden, and thus in the darkest period of the struggle for liberty was the Leyden University founded, being handsomely endowed, chiefly from the revenues of the Abbey of Egmont.

CHAPTER XVI.

ATTEMPTS ON THE PART OF SPAIN TO ARRANGE A PEACE.
SPANISH TREACHERY. THE STATES-GENERAL CONFER
ABSOLUTE POWER ON THE PRINCE.

ALVA gone, Alkmaar and Leyden relieved, the brave Hollanders could draw breath. Their enemies would indeed find it desirable to make peace with them, crippled as Spain was for money; and in the year 1574, the new Regent, Requesens, commissioned Doctor Elbertus Leoninus, Professor of Louvain, and Hugo Bonte, Ex-pensionary of Middleburg, to treat secretly on this matter with the Prince of Orange. But when they spoke to the Prince about his pardon and reconciliation with Philip, he refused to treat at all except in co-operation with the Estates; and he objected to the word "*pardon*," since he had never done anything requiring the king's forgiveness. When reminded of Philip's power, he answered, that he knew his Majesty to be very mighty, but that there was a king more powerful still—even God, the Creator, who, he humbly hoped, was on his side.

At a later interview with Hugo Bonte, the Prince declared "it was almost impossible for him to treat with any agents of the Spanish government, as no trust could be placed, either in safe-conducts, hostages, or plighted word." Then he mentioned many instances of treachery on the part of the Spaniards, particularly that of the return of three exchanged prisoners from the Hague, who died next

day of poison administered before their release. And he also spoke of the frequent attempts on his own life. All these crimes made it unsafe and almost impossible to treat with His Majesty's government, since every one would fear assassination. After much parleying the Prince gave the Spanish agents warning that he might eventually be obliged to seek the protection of some foreign power for the Netherlands. Other conferences were held, but always with the same result, namely that the Prince would accept no reconciliation unless the foreign troops departed, entire freedom of religion were granted, and the Estates-General assembled.

These proceedings occupied the summer and autumn of 1574, and were not quite concluded till early in 1575. Hitherto the Prince had exercised his power under the fiction of doing so for Philip as his Stadtholder; but a change was becoming necessary. Holland and Zeland, even now that they had lost Harlem and were abandoned by Amsterdam, contributed 210,000 florins a month for government expenses, whereas Alva had never been able to raise more than 271,000 florins in a whole year from Holland; but now that the cities gave so much they expected more power, and even tried to restrict the rule of their liberator, whom, a year before, they had wished to clothe with the power of a dictator.

As the only remedy the Prince tendered his resignation of all the powers he held, so that the Estates might take the government without control into their own hands. Then, indeed, they felt that to give up William of Orange was to accept the Spanish yoke for ever, and at an assembly held at Delft, the 12th of November, 1574, they requested him to continue "in his blessed government, with the council established near him;" and offered him, under the name of Governor or Regent, absolute power, authority

and sovereign command, and in particular they granted him entire control of all ships of war; and the Prince accepted the Government on these terms.

During the early winter of 1574, the Emperor Maximilian had been trying to bring about a peace for the Netherlands, and with good reason, "for," said the French ambassador in Spain, "the Emperor maintains that if peace is not made with the Beggars the Empire will depart from the house of Austria, that such is the determination of the electors" (in Germany).

Philip, too, needed peace; for Requesens could raise no money in the Netherlands, and as for Orange, he was sincerely desirous of peace, but not of peace on dishonourable terms. Yet he hoped little, knowing that all the people claimed liberty to remain at home and exercise the Protestant religion, while Philip asserted his right to banish them for ever, or to burn them if they remained.

The peace negotiations were opened at Breda, the 3d of March, 1575. After asking what complaints the Estates had to make, and giving vague answers to the demands of the Estates for the departure of the foreign troops and the assembling of the States-general, the Royal Commissioners concluded by requiring that all cities, fortresses, and castles, together with all artillery and weapons of war, should be delivered up to the King. The Roman Catholic worship was alone to be established in the Netherlands, all persons of the Reformed Faith receiving permission *for that time only*, to sell their property and depart the country within a fixed time. The Prince and the Estates answered this on the 21st March; they said that, "Touching the delivery of cities and citadels, ships and artillery into the hands of the King it was much like the proposal made by the wolves in the fable, that the dogs should be given up as a preliminary to a lasting peace. It was unreasonable

to require the Hollanders to abandon either their religion or their country, and more cruel to expel a whole population than to send 3,000 or 4,000 Spaniards away, who for seven years had lived at the expense of the Provinces. Besides, the exiles could not possibly dispose of their property, since all would want to sell and there would be no buyers."

The Royal plenipotentiaries answered this on April the 1st. The foreign soldiers should depart, if the Estates would dismiss their own foreign troops. The Estates-General might assemble, but no change could be permitted in the religion of the country; however, the reformers should be allowed six months in which to leave the land, and from eight to ten years to dispose of their property. After the heretics had all departed, His Majesty did not doubt that trade and manufactures would flourish again along with the old religion. As for the Spanish Inquisition, there never had been any intention of establishing it in the Netherlands.

There was a pause in the deliberations. The reply of the Prince and the Estates was unavoidably delayed (owing to discussions in the various cities) till June the 1st. They then said that the offer to assemble the States-General sounded well, but they regretted that if the whole population must be banished, few would receive any benefit from its being called together. It was impossible for the Estates to disband their army and surrender their fortresses before the Spanish soldiers were gone and peace established. The question of religion would be decided by the Estates.

On the 8th of July, the Royal Commissioners asked what guarantee the States would give that the decisions of the States-General would be obeyed. This was replied to by asking what guarantees the *King* would give. The answer

was that His Majesty would give his word and sign, with the word and signature of the Emperor.

In exchange for these promises the Prince and the Estates were expected to pledge their oaths and give a number of hostages, and to deliver up the cities of Brill, Enkhuizen, Flushing, and Arnemuyde: four cities, with all their population and wealth, in exchange for Philip's word, so often and so basely broken. This closed the negotiations.

Union of Holland and Zeland.—In the course of this summer of 1575, the foundation was laid for the union of Holland and Zeland under the authority of Orange. In the Articles of Union drawn up, it was declared that the Prince, as sovereign, should have absolute power in all matters concerning the defence of the country. He was to regulate the expenditure of money voted, to maintain the law in the king's name as Count of Holland, to appoint all military officers, to establish and remove garrisons, to appoint and renew the magistrates and all judicial officers named by the Estates, to protect the exercise of the Reformed religion, and to suppress the exercise of the Romish religion (without permitting, however, that search should be made into any person's belief). On the 11th of July the Prince formally accepted the government on this basis, but he made an important change in a few words. He insisted that the words "religion at variance with the Gospel" should be used, instead of the words "Romish religion," thus leaving open the way for religious toleration.

Third marriage of the Prince of Orange.—During some of his visits to the Elector Palatine of Bavaria, the Prince had seen at Heidelberg the Princess Charlotte of Bourbon, daughter of the Duc de Montpensier, a lady of great beauty, virtue, and intelligence, who had been forced to take the vows and enter the Convent of Jouarrs before the right age;

of which convent she afterwards became the Abbess. Her father was the most zealous of the Catholic princes of France, whilst the princess was always inclined to the Reformed religion; she therefore fled from the convent in 1572, and took refuge with the Elector Palatine, for her father refused even to receive her letters or give her a single farthing.

The Prince of Orange had been formally divorced from his second wife, Anna of Saxony, who had seemed a lunatic almost from the beginning of her marriage. She took such a dislike to the Prince that it became the talk of Brussels; passed week after week in her room with the shutters closed and candles burning; quarrelled violently with the Countess Egmont, and was so insolent to her husband that, on one occasion, at a supper party, she used such opprobrious language to him that all wondered. The Prince bore this with sadness and patience, hoping that with age would come improvement. Her reproaches and violence increased when misfortunes gathered round him, and she finally left him altogether. Her temper was ferocious. She beat her servants with clubs, and attempted her own life and the lives of her attendants, and that of her brother-in-law, Count John of Nassau, assaulting the latter with knives and daggers, using the most fearful language; besides which, she became more and more addicted to drinking. She would take as much as two quarts of wine a-day. Together with all this she behaved in such a manner that the Prince felt justified in dissolving the marriage.

The wretched Princess was given over to the safe custody of the Elector of Saxony, who, when she became altogether a lunatic, imprisoned her in a chamber in the Electoral palace. She died mad, the 18th of December, 1577.

The Princess Charlotte of Bourbon was conducted to Brill by Sainte Aldegonde, and there married to Orange

the 12th of June, 1575. Very great anger was felt at this marriage both in France and Germany.

Cruelties of Diedrich Sonoy.—Diedrich Sonoy, the governor over part of Holland, a man as ferociously cruel as he was brave, had discovered a conspiracy among some of the inhabitants to aid a Spanish invasion. Fortunately Sonoy was not a Hollander, for the vengeance he took was so frantic that the pen refuses to record some of the tortures to which he subjected his victims. When his evil doings reached the ears of Orange, the Prince's peremptory orders checked his outrages. Like the Count de la Marck, Sonoy had disgraced the cause of liberty; but we must remember that his were the crimes of a single individual, not of the people of Holland and Zeland.

Recapture of part of Zeland by Spain.—Requesens was most anxious to recapture some part of Zeland, the three chief islands of which were Tholen, Duiveland, and Schouwen. The capital of the latter was the strong city of Zierickzee; and Schouwen was the island coveted by Requesens. Although the estuaries of the rivers swarmed with Zeland vessels, manned by celebrated crews, yet traitors from Zeland itself made known to the enemy a narrow, submerged flat, stretching to Duiveland from a small uninhabited islet named Philipsland, close to Tholen. The passage was perilous, but could be made at ebb-tide, and once at Duiveland (Dovesland), the less dangerous creek to Schouwen could be more easily crossed, and siege laid to Zierickzee; since the Zeland ships could not sail near enough to intercept the passage of the enemy.

The night chosen for the enterprise was the 27th of September, a wild night lit up by incessant lightning. The besieging force had to wade breast-high, often in total darkness, and constantly assailed by the Zelanders, over so narrow a pathway, that if they turned from it ever so little,

they perished in the waters. Yet soon after daylight, after many losses, the main body, consisting of Spaniards, Walloons, and Germans, reached the opposite shore in good order. Ten companies of French, Scotch, and English auxiliaries lay at Duiveland, under the command of Charles Van Boisot, but the latter being slain (either by accident or design as the enemy landed), a panic ensued, and the conquest of Duiveland was at once effected.

After this, the troops of Requesens more easily landed at Schouwen, reduced two places on the island, and then laid siege to Zierickzee; thus interrupting the communication between Walcheren and the rest of Zeland, cutting the province in two, and giving the Spaniards a foothold on the ocean. This was an unspeakable grief to the Prince. He and his country were alone in their struggle, at a time too when the momentous question of formally renouncing Philip's authority, and of finding some other sovereign strong enough to accept what Philip had forfeited had to be decided. The choice naturally lay between France, England, and the Germanic Empire.

Proposal to throw off Philip's rule.—The nobles and deputies of South Holland now voted "that it was their duty to abandon the King, as a tyrant who sought to oppress and destroy his subjects, and that it behoved them to seek another protector,"—and on October the 1st, the Prince formally proposed to the Estates assembled at Rotterdam, either to make terms with the enemy or to separate entirely from the King of Spain, in order to sustain the Provinces against their enemies by means of the protection of another Christian potentate. After an adjournment of a few days, the diet re-assembled at Delft, and "it was unanimously resolved by the nobles and cities that *they would forsake the King* and seek foreign assistance, referring the choice to the Prince, who was to take an opinion of the Estates."

Thus these two small provinces declared their independence of their former tyrant, but so little did they foresee their coming greatness, that having thrown off the yoke of one rule they thought it necessary to seek that of another. They resolved to send a mission in the first place to England.

Mission to Queen Elizabeth.—The envoys from Orange and from the Estates of Holland arrived in England at Christmas, and were graciously received by Elizabeth. They offered her the sovereignty over Holland and Zeland upon certain conditions, stating that they addressed themselves to her as an upright protector of the faith and a Princess descended from the blood of Holland (alluding to the marriage of Edward III. with Philippa of Hainault, daughter of Count William III. of Holland and Hainault). Requesens at once sent a counter embassy.

Elizabeth would give no decided answer, and after much deliberation, (the Queen refusing either to lay the matter before her Parliament or to allow the Netherland Envoys to do so), they at last applied for their passports to return home, April, 1576. Commissioners were now appointed to make the same proposals at the French court, but in consequence of the Duke d' Alençon's attitude towards the Provinces, the negotiations were not proceeded with, and Holland and Zeland were still alone in the struggle with their powerful enemy.

Meantime, Requesens was in despair for want of money, and the siege of the important city of Zierickzee continued. It became evident that the place must soon fall.

The New and Sublime Resolve of William the Silent.—It was now that a sublime but desperate idea filled the Prince's mind. There was no hope from England or France for the two little provinces; Holland and Zeland were cut in two, and Zierickzee trembled to its fall. The

provinces were without money and without assistance. Neither was there hope of help from Germany, torn as it was with disputes even amongst the Reformers themselves. Still the Prince had conceived a last plan to shut out the Spaniards for ever from Holland and Zeland, and to save the inhabitants from tyranny. Long had he thought over the scheme, and the present seemed the hour for its fulfilment. His project was to collect all the vessels of every kind, and to take the whole population on board, together with all the moveable property, to burn the wind-mills, pierce the dykes, open the sluices in every direction, restore the country for ever to the ocean, and then to seek a new home for freedom on some distant shore.

Death of Requesens.—The unexpected death of Requesens prevented this resolve being carried out. He died from fever and anxiety occasioned by a mutiny among his troops, the 5th of March, 1577.

CHAPTER XVII.

CONDITION OF THE PROVINCES.

REQUESENS had died so suddenly that he had no time to name a successor, and therefore till the King should appoint one, the Council of State carried on the government in the royal name. When the news of the Regent's death reached Madrid, Philip was exceedingly angry that he should have died at such an inconvenient moment, and not being able to make up his mind whom to choose in the place of Requesens, for the present he chose nobody.

Under these circumstances, the Prince of Orange opened a fresh correspondence with many of the leading men in Brussels and different parts of the Netherlands, who now for the first time seemed disposed to range themselves on his side. Hitherto the country had been most unequally divided. There were the two provinces of Holland and Zeland devoted to the Prince; their inhabitants were of the Reformed religion; while the other fifteen provinces were on the whole loyal to the King, and perhaps, half their population Roman Catholic. At the same time, all they had suffered under Alva and from the foreign soldiery, had, notwithstanding the difference of religion, drawn all the seventeen provinces to feel with each other, and to aim at expelling the foreigners and regaining their ancient privileges.

Never had a contest been more unequal than that which Holland and Zeland had waged alone. "Upon that sand-bank, varying from four to forty miles in width, and about one hundred and twenty miles in length, one man, backed

by its inhabitants did battle for nine years against the master of two worlds and conquered him at last !” Nor must we forget that the heroic Prince was not master of the whole of the small territory we have just named ; Harlem had fallen, and Amsterdam was on the side of the King, and the loss of this last town was so severe, that William the Silent affirmed that all the efforts of the enemy had not hurt their cause so much as the defection of Amsterdam. Besides this, the country was in a most desolate condition. The war, and the destruction of the dykes, had swept the land almost bare of cattle, so that it was necessary to pass a law forbidding for a considerable length of time, the slaughter of “oxen, cows, calves, sheep, or poultry.” Very great labour and expense must be incurred also before the great dykes could be reconstructed.

New Act of Union.—As we have said, the political union of the two provinces of Holland and Zeland took place in June, 1575, but a new Act of Union was duly signed on the 25th of June, 1576, at Delft, by which it was agreed that deputies from all the Estates should meet when summoned by the Prince ; that free intercourse and traffic through both provinces should be secured ; that they should mutually assist each other in preventing all wrong or violence, and that the expenses which were necessary to be borne should be apportioned between them all. The government, thus settled, was placed in the Prince’s hands, and on him was conferred supreme authority ; also the whole protection of the land devolved on him. It mattered nothing to the Prince whether he was named Stadtholder, Guardian, or King. The people, from highest to lowest, called him “Father William,” and that title was enough for him. He did not care what men should term him, but how he should best perform his work.

To drive out the oppressor, to crush the Inquisition, to uphold the ancient liberties of the Netherlands, was reward sufficient for him. But he would sanction no persecution (an immense virtue in that age), especially in a man sincerely attached to the Reformed religion.

Meantime England and France jealously watched what each might do concerning the Netherlands. Neither wished the other to have the sovereignty over them. Queen Elizabeth was afraid to accept it because she thought of the money that would be asked of her to support the war ; so she wrote to the Prince saying she could not yet accept the sovereignty or protect the inhabitants ; she would first make other efforts to reconcile them to their own king. The Prince now forced the two United Provinces to renew negotiations with France. These were opened with the Duke of Anjou, who was the French King's brother, and the leader of the Huguenot party.

As for Germany, there were so many disputes there among the Reformers themselves, that they could not understand what toleration meant, since all claimed the right of persecuting. It was not to Germany, therefore, that the Prince could look for help. He was so loaded with work, sorrow, and business, that he had scarcely a moment's leisure from morning to night, while besides all his other pressing labours he was now actively engaged, in the spring of 1576, in attempting to relieve the city of Zierickzee.

Surrender of Zierickzee.—This town, the key to half Zeland, had been closely besieged ever since the troops sent by Requesens had landed on Duiveland. After great but unsuccessful efforts to save the place, the Prince instructed the town to accept honourable terms of surrender, and the Spanish commander, Mondragon, was but too glad to grant them, for his army was ready to mutiny.

On this occasion, therefore, the horrors of sacking and burning were averted. "Had we received the least succour the poor city should never have fallen," wrote the Prince.

Serious Mutiny of the Spanish Troops.—But no sooner was Zierickzee captured than a very serious mutiny broke out among the Spanish army at Schouwen. Promises of pay and pardon were freely made to the mutineers, but by the middle of July these troops, beyond control, imprisoned their own officers at Zierickzee. Having swept the island of Schouwen bare of everything, they marched into Brabant, devouring as they went. The citizens of Brussels were terrified at their approach; but the mutineers finally seized the town of Alost, in Flanders, carrying it by storm and murdering all who resisted them. The excitement in Brussels was now intense. It was suspected that fifteen companies of German troops would join in the mutiny.

Here was a serious state of affairs. A wild rebellious army in the centre of the land, the citizens trembling for what was to come next; the State Council too weak to exercise any real authority. The inhabitants for the most part now cried out that a sentence of outlawry should be passed on the whole of the foreign troops. By the beginning of September all the Spanish army, officers as well as men, had mutinied, and the most important German troops had joined them, while Sancho d'Avila, who had possession of the important citadel of Antwerp, held open communication with the rebel army at Alost. The castles of Antwerp, Valenciennes, Ghent, Utrecht, Culemborg, Viane, Alost, were now all in the hands of the revolted troops, and the country was as if bound hand and foot.

Depredations of every kind were incessant, the Spaniards treating every Netherlander as an enemy. Gentleman and

peasant, Protestant and Papist, priest and layman, ^{all} were alike maltreated and outraged. No wonder that the whole population should cry out, and feel the necessity of making an effort to rid themselves of the foreign troops!

CHAPTER XVIII.

EFFORTS OF THE PRINCE.—HIS ADDRESSES.

MEANTIME the Prince was at Middleburg, watching the course of events in this new disaster. Divided as the Provinces were by difference of religion, he hoped to bind them together by their common desire to expel the soldiery and regain their ancient privileges. He now made use of the general indignation against the atrocities committed by the foreign army to influence the inhabitants at large to act in concert to resist their oppressors. Day after day, in countless addresses, he seized every occasion to urge the people to band together in the common cause for liberty.

We will quote one or two of these appeals. "I write to warn you," he wrote to the Estates of Gelderland, "to seize this present opportunity. Shake from your necks the yoke of the godless Spanish tyranny, join yourselves at once to the lovers of the fatherland, to the defenders of freedom. According to the examples of your own ancestors and ours, redeem for the country its ancient laws, traditions, and privileges. Permit no longer to your shame and ours, a band of Spanish landloupers and other foreigners, together with three or four self-seeking enemies of their own land, to keep their feet upon our necks. Let them no longer, in the very wantonness of tyranny, drive us about like a herd of cattle—like a gang of well-tamed slaves." To the Estates of Brabant he wrote, "I beg you with all affection to consider the danger in which you have placed yourselves. You have to deal with the proudest and most overbearing

race in the world. For these qualities they are hated by all other nations. They are even hateful to themselves. 'Tis a race which seeks to domineer wheresoever it comes. It particularly declares its intention to crush and to tyrannise you, my masters, and all the land. I tell you that your last act, by which you have declared this army to be rebels, is decisive. You have armed and excited the whole people against them . . . and the insults and injuries thus received, however richly deserved, are all set down to your account. Therefore 'tis necessary for you to decide now, whether to be utterly ruined yourselves and your children, or to continue firmly the work which you have begun boldly, and rather die a hundred thousand deaths than to make a treaty with them which can only end in your ruin. Be assured that the measure dealt to you will be ignominy as well as destruction."

To recover their Constitution, to lift up their down-trodden rights, he set before them the necessity of union. "'Tis impossible that a chariot should move evenly," he said, "having its wheels unequally proportioned; and so must a Confederation be broken to pieces if there be not an equal obligation on all to tend to a common purpose." Union could alone save them from a common tyrant. Disunion had been the cause of all their woes. "Nothing remains to us," he also wrote, "but to discard all jealousy and distrust. Let us with a common accord liberate these lands from the stranger. Hand to hand let us accomplish a just and general peace." Adding—"that he should regard" (all his labours and pains which were past well bestowed) "if God now grant me to see the desired end."

The Prince aimed at uniting *all* the provinces and making a general effort to expel their tyrants, and his appeals were not without effect. By the middle of October a large number of deputies assembled by appointment to deliberate

at Ghent. Meantime, conflicts took place every day between the rebel soldiers and the citizens, the former, trained to war on many a field, were naturally victorious. The Council seemed paralysed ; the capital was not sufficiently garrisoned, and a painful sense of coming evil was felt by the whole population.

Don John of Austria appointed Regent.—Philip had at last appointed his natural brother, Don John of Austria, as the new Regent, but the latter had not yet arrived in the Netherlands.

Members of the Council of State made Prisoners.—A sudden blow was now struck at the Council of State which had long been despised for its inability to exercise its power. The members in full council were made prisoners by a young gentleman, the Seigneur de Hézes, who was in secret relations with Orange. He surrounded the palace with five hundred troops, and, demanding admittance in the name of Brabant and the Estates, he entered and made the members prisoners.

Citadel of Ghent besieged. Maestricht freed and recaptured.—It had been agreed that the deputies from the Estates who were to deliberate on the union of all the provinces were to meet at Ghent, notwithstanding that the Citadel of that town was in the hands of the Spaniards. The garrison, however, was not very strong, and Mondragon, the Governor, was absent in Zeland ; his wife, however, ably supplying his place. The Estates, not having troops enough to attack the Citadel, sent to the Prince for aid. He agreed to send them twenty-eight companies, and the siege was now pressed on vigorously. At the same time the city of Maestricht made a courageous effort to free itself from the Spaniards, the citizens gaining over to their side the German garrison, and with their help driving the Spanish troops from the town.

Alas ! this success was short-lived ; the expelled commander, Don Francis d'Ayala, made a stand at Wieck, a village on the opposite side of the Meuse, connected with Ghent by a massive stone bridge. From this point he sent for reinforcements, and prepared to recapture the place. But it would be destructive to advance across the bridge, which was defended by a strong battery. In order to shield themselves from this danger, the Spaniards resorted to a cowardly trick. There were many women in the village of Wieck ; each Spanish soldier seized one, and placing her before him, advanced, thus shielded, to the bridge. Its defenders dared not discharge their cannon on their own towns-women, sisters and mothers, and thus, by this mean device, Maestricht was recovered by the enemy, and the drowning, burning, and butchery that followed were so great and so dreadful, that those who escaped the fight, were less fortunate than those who were slain.

The Spanish Fury.—After the terrible fate of Maestricht, fresh disasters were felt to be at hand. The original mutineers were no longer contented with a city like Alost, but there was gold enough and to spare in Antwerp where the merchants lived like princes, and where (in spite of the miseries of the Netherlands), its palaces and magazines were bursting with treasures. Every hour an attack from the rebel forces might be expected, and the city cried out for help.

Champagny, brother of Cardinal Granvelle, was Governor of Antwerp, but he sincerely hated the Spaniards, and had offered to co-operate with Orange to expel them. Unfortunately the enemy had already communicated with the German troops within the walls, and when Brussels sent a large force of Walloons and Germans (November the 2nd), to the assistance of Antwerp, Champagny hesitated to admit them, fearing they might use their arms against the city.

However they marched in at ten o'clock the next day, and began by insulting the people whom they were sent to protect, quartering themselves in the best houses which they could find. But the Governor made them bivouack in the streets, and flew from house to house turning them out at the peril of his life. In the course of the day a cannonade from the Citadel began which made it exceedingly difficult to erect ramparts. Notwithstanding this, the wall of the city was strengthened by upturned waggons, merchandise and casks of earth hastily piled together. Night came on before the hasty defence was finished, (unfortunately, it was moonlight), and the cannon continued to pour upon the unfinished rampart. Champagny did all he could. With his own hands, (assisted by only a few citizens and servants) he planted the few cannon they had to play upon the castle. The troops from Brussels had brought no artillery.

The morning broke with a thick mist hanging over the city, and at ten o'clock all the mutineers from Alost marched into the castle, and when offered food, refused everything but a draught of wine, saying they would either dine in Paradise or sup in Antwerp. Thus spoke these men who were about to do the work of demons. They then swept forward, three thousand in number, to the city, attacking first the Walloon troops. These last gave way with scarcely a struggle. Champagny, who had made heroic efforts to save the town, now leaped a garden wall, ran through a house into a narrow lane, and thence joined the German troops and tried to rally them. Collecting a small force he himself led them to the rescue, and these men fought and died well; but the Walloons, in full retreat, gave no help. Then the brave Governor, galloping in all directions, called on the citizens to die in defence of their homes. And not in vain.

From every house, street, and alley, the burghers came out and fought as men fight when all they love is at stake; but the order of defence was broken, and these individual citizens were no match for the disciplined soldiers of Spain. This savage horde forced their way through the city calling out: "St James! Spain! blood! flesh! fire! sack!" The battle raged in every direction, and particularly in front of the magnificent Exchange, where in times of peace five thousand merchants had met every day for business. The marble pavement ran red with blood. The ill-armed citizens made a brave defence, but their resistance was at last overcome; they could only die once for their homes.

Champagny was making a last effort to bring back the flying cavalry; but without success. They fled, seized with panic. One horseman even leaped from the parapet of the outer wall into the moat, and though in complete armour with lance in rest, he escaped with his life. And now a confused mass of conquerors and conquered swayed hither and thither, and the fugitives fled to the quays across the Horse-market. Many fell by the sword; numbers were trodden to death; still more were hunted into the river. Champagny though deserted tried to the last to make a stand, and when he knew all chance was gone, with great skill and bravery he managed to escape to the Prince's fleet in the Scheldt.

The short November day closed in, and still the fight raged in the streets. A long struggle took place in the great Square (*Grande Place*), but the citizens, forced to retreat to the houses, continued a hot fire from every window and balcony. The Spaniards set the houses on fire; they had, indeed, brought with them materials expressly for this purpose. In a brief time, street after street was in flames. Nearly a thousand splendid buildings were

speedily in a blaze, and multitudes of human beings perished in them. A crowd of citizens, magistrates and such of the German soldiers as were still alive, made a fierce struggle just behind the Town-house. There the brave Margrave of the city, Goswyn Verreyck, fought for his townspeople, till he too sank amid the slain, and with him all resistance ended, and mere butchery began. Countless numbers of children, women, and old men were murdered; the Spaniards behaving worse than the most ferocious wild beasts.

Never was there a more cruel massacre. It was quite night before the Spaniards were masters of the city. They had come for gold, and gold they determined to have. The fire had burnt at least six millions of property; but much treasure was left. To obtain this treasure the most horrible crimes were committed, crimes too horrible to particularise. Infants were dashed out of their mother's arms, parents tortured, women were scourged.

One lady with her aged mother and the women of her household took refuge in the cellar of their dwelling. Unfortunately the Spaniards discovered them, and finding the door barred, applied gunpowder to it. The aged mother, happily for herself, fell dead; the daughter, less fortunate, was hanged from a beam in the cellar because she could neither tell them where her husband was, nor show them where any treasure was hidden. When she was nearly dead they cut her down and questioned her again, and this they repeated several times; but as she could tell them nothing they at last left her hanging.

The after fate of this poor lady was sad in the extreme; one of her own servants took her down from the beam, and her life was thus saved, but she lost her reason, and all her remaining days she wandered about trying to find the treasure for the sake of which she had been so tortured.

It would be impossible to detail the cruelties practised ; one or two instances only are recorded here, to show the horrors which the Spaniards inflicted on the defenceless inhabitants. A young lady and gentleman, both rich, had just been married at the time of the outbreak. The wedding feast was going on as the cries of the Spaniards sounded in the streets. A well-armed band of ruffians forced their way into the house, robbing plate-chests, jewellery, wardrobes. Everything possessed by the parents of the bride and bridegroom, was freely offered, in the hope of purchasing safety, but because they could not give still more than they had, the Spanish soldiers struck the bridegroom dead, murdered the bride's mother and father, and carried off the unhappy bride, whom they shut up in a lonely chamber of the fortress. The poor young lady, still in her wedding dress, having lost all she loved, tried to save herself from the wretches who had taken her prisoner by strangling herself with the thick gold chain she wore. Alas, that she did not quite succeed ! When they returned, they stripped her of all her wedding clothing and jewellery, scourged her till she was bathed in blood, and so sent her back to the city. Here, nearly mad, she wandered about till some soldiers stabbed her.

The next morning, November the 5th, Antwerp was a ghastly sight indeed. The magnificent marble Town-house destroyed all but the walls,—the most splendid part of the city consumed,—dead bodies on every side ! There were piles of dead—heaps of slain, some half consumed by fire.

This was the "Spanish Fury" as it has been called, and all the crimes which men can commit were committed by the Spaniards while it lasted. More were massacred in this Spanish Fury than in the Paris massacre of Saint Bartholomew. As for the plunder, the four or five thousand Spaniards engaged in "the Fury" divided four

or five millions of treasure among them, and in most cases recklessly squandered it. A few officers of distinction were taken prisoners by the Spaniards, amongst whom was the Count Egmont, a young noble in every way inferior to his father, though he fought bravely at the head of his coward troops. This was the unfortunate beginning of his inglorious career.

When the news of the Spanish Fury spread, a deep thrill of indignation, not fear, went through the country. The Estates of Brabant appealed to the States-General, urging that "Antwerp was but yesterday the principal ornament of Europe, the source of countless treasure; the guardian of science and virtue, the protectrice of the Roman Catholic Religion, and above all—more than faithful and obedient to her sovereign lord and prince. The city is now changed to a gloomy cavern filled with robbers and murderers, enemies of God, the King, and all good subjects." They then recited the story of the massacre, "whereof the memory shall be abominable so long as the world stands."

Treaty of Union between the Provinces signed at Ghent. Zierickzee restored.—The Prince of Orange now addressed a letter to the States-General assembled at Ghent, urging them to conclude the treaty of Union. When he wrote this, the news of the massacre had not reached him at Middleburg, but his letter and the tidings of this dark deed arriving about the same time, produced much effect.

In this masterly appeal, he showed the necessity of proving that the *whole* people, peasants, gentlemen, nobles, prelates, with one voice and one will demanded the same thing. To such a union the King would not dare to oppose himself, and could no longer say it was the desire of only a few individuals. By such a union they would inspire foreign princes with confidence to aid them, but the

Princes of Germany, the nobles of France, the Queen of England, though sympathising with their misfortunes, could never effectually help them, while disunion prevailed among themselves.

The Prince's eloquence, backed by the news of the massacre, induced the Congress at Ghent to conclude the treaty. They signed the deed of Union on the 8th day of November, and thus for a time were all the sacrifices of the Prince rewarded. In the twenty-five articles agreed on, it was resolved to forgive and forget past animosities, to live in faithful friendship for the future, to expel the Spaniards without delay, and then to assemble the States-General. Holland and Zeland were to attempt nothing against the Roman Catholic religion, while all the edicts against heresy were to be suspended. After the departure of the Spaniards the Prince was to remain lieutenant, admiral and general for His Majesty in Holland, Zeland, and the associated places till the States-General provided otherwise.

The deputies who signed were appointed by Brabant, Flanders, Artois, Hainault, Valenciennes, Lille, Douay, Orchies, Namur, Tournay, Utrecht, and Mechlin on the one side; and the Estates of Holland on the other. The Reformed religion was now established in two provinces; and tolerated in *all*; while the Inquisition was abolished; and this was the work of William the Silent. His satisfaction was most deep and sincere when he heard that the treaty was to be signed, for the labour of many years was thus crowned with success. The whole country received the news with a shout of joy, and it was proclaimed in every city and village, and celebrated by hymns of thanksgiving, by triumphant music, by beacon fires and cannon.

Another event occurred at the same time to increase the general contentment. Zierickzee, deserted by the mutineers, was obliged to be abandoned by the Spaniards.

and the whole island of Schouwen with the rest of Zeland (excepting the island of Tholen) was recovered for Orange. Thus many great events happened simultaneously ; Zeland redeemed, Antwerp ruined, and the League of all the Netherlands against the Spaniards concluded.

The day before the Antwerp massacre, and four days before the publication of the Treaty of Union between the Provinces, a man attended by a Moorish slave and six men-at-arms, rode into Luxembourg. This man was no other than Don John of Austria, half-brother to Philip of Spain, the new Governor-General of the Netherlands.

CHAPTER XIX.

DON JOHN OF AUSTRIA. THE PRINCE ADVISES WHAT
NEGOTIATIONS SHOULD BE MADE WITH HIM.

THE new Governor of the Netherlands was now in his thirty-second year, having been born at Ratisbon, the 24th of February, 1545. His mother, originally a washer-woman, was a person of a most resolute will and turbulent disposition, so unmanageable that Alva, (who feared no man) found it impossible to bend her to his will. Obstinate, reckless, and very extravagant, she refused either to leave Ghent or to go to Spain, or enter a convent, all of which things Alva had been instructed to force her to do.

Her name had been Barbara Blomberg, but she had married Pyramus Kegell, a military commissary in the Netherlands, who, dying, left her a widow. On the arrival of her son, the new Governor, she was at last persuaded by him to leave the country and retire to Spain.

Don John's early childhood had been passed in the latter country, where he had been brought up by a person in the imperial household, Louis Quixada, who lived in great retirement at Villagarcia. The child was called Juan Quixada, and not allowed to know that his father was the Emperor Charles V. He was full of beauty and grace, and none could break a lance or ride or tame unruly horses so well as he. His father meant him to be a priest, but died just as his clerical studies began, and he was saved

from a life which would have been most uncongenial to his nature.

One day, when the boy was fourteen, his supposed parent, Quixada, took him to see the royal hunt among the mountains of Toro. When the bugles were heard Quixada suddenly stopped, dismounted, and told the astonished boy to mount the handsome horse he had himself been riding. In a few moments more they met the royal party, and Philip coming up, embraced the boy, telling him that they were brothers. From this time Don John was educated with Philip's own son Don Carlos.

In his twenty-third year he was appointed to conduct a famous campaign against the Moors of Granada, and began his military career by expelling with great cruelty all the Moorish inhabitants of that place,—bed-ridden men, women and children with the rest. A few Moors held out amongst the mountains, and sent envoys to the Turks for help, but without success; the Turks, however, siezed Venice and butchered thousands of Venetians with a barbarity almost as great as that which the Christians of Spain had shown in the Netherlands. It was then that Don John was sent to fight the Moslems, with 23,000 men, Venice and Rome being in alliance with Spain. At the end of six months' cruising, the Christian and Turkish fleets met, six hundred vessels of war, in the Gulf of Lepanto. The battle raged from noon till sunset, when it was won after terrible carnage by Don John and his allies; only fifty Turkish galleys escaping out of three hundred, and from twenty-five to thirty thousand Turks being slain. Don John fought with extreme bravery, and in consequence of this victory his name spread through the world.

Alva writing to congratulate him, said, that no such victory had been achieved since the days of Julius Cæsar. The young and ambitious conqueror then made a descent

on the African Coast, captured Tunis, thoroughly repaired the fortifications, garrisoned the place and wished to be proclaimed king of Tunis, and to establish a new Carthage. But Philip feared what such a restless spirit might do, and disappointed him of the Empire he had aspired to, and Don John now came to the Netherlands, secretly determined to throne Elizabeth of England, place Mary Queen of Scots on her throne, espouse the latter, and thus establish a kingdom for himself. He believed he could soon settle the paltry Netherland difficulties, and then, with the Spanish soldiers already in that country, secure his prize of England.

As the journey to the Netherlands through France was dangerous in those treacherous days, he stained his fair hair and face to look like those of a Moor, and dressed as a servant arrived in Paris, where he alighted at a hostelry opposite to the Spanish Ambassador's. With the latter he had a secret interview after nightfall; but, notwithstanding his hurry, he went that very night to a great ball at the Louvre in disguise, and there first saw the beautiful Queen Navarre, Margaret de Valois. It was the 3rd of November before he arrived in Luxembourg, full of schemes, hopes and visions. Every writer of the time has spoken of the great fascination of manner and personal attractions of Don John. He had blue eyes, a profusion of curling fair hair swept back from his forehead, symmetrical features, a perfectly well-proportioned figure, and was somewhat above the middle height. Such was the newly-appointed Governor-General of the Netherlands. Philip had secretly instructed him to conciliate the Provinces, but to concede nothing, and to restore the government to what it had been in the time of the Emperor Charles V. A difficult task, to restore that same condition of things in which all Protestants were beheaded, burned, or buried alive,

now that the principle of religious toleration was accepted by all the seventeen provinces and the reformed faith was the received religion of two of them. So long as the Inquisition, the king's absolute authority, and the sole worship of the Romish Church were preserved, Philip professed to wish to "extinguish the fires of rebellion, and to save the people from the last desperation." "More than this cannot and ought not to be conceded," added Philip.

William of Orange knew that the treaty just signed at Ghent would never be observed by any one appointed by Philip, and if that treaty were broken now, the Reformed religion was doomed, and likewise the liberties of Holland and Zeland. Therefore he lost no time in warning the States-General of the course to be pursued. Force would doubtless be replaced by fraud, and the Prince expressed his belief that beneath the smiling surface of fair words deadlier purposes lurked. If the Netherlanders could seize Don John, (so great was the respect Philip felt for him as the son of the Emperor), their demands might be granted rather than his liberty endangered.

On arriving at Luxembourg, Don John had demanded hostages for his own safety. "He asks you to disarm, to furnish hostages," wrote the Prince to the Estates-General, "but the time has been when the lord of the land came unarmed and uncovered before the Estates-General, and swore to support the Constitutions before his own sovereignty could be recognised." "Make no agreement with him," he continued, "unless the Spanish and other foreign troops have been sent away beforehand ; beware meanwhile of disbanding your own, for that were to put the knife into his hands to cut your own throats withal."

He then went on to sketch a plan of negotiation. Don John must command the immediate departure of the

Spaniards. All privileges must be revised and an oath taken to maintain them. The States-General must administer and regulate all affairs. The citadels must everywhere be destroyed, and no troops be enlisted, nor garrisons established anywhere without the consent of the Estates. "*Remember this is not play,*" said the Prince, "and that you have to choose between total ruin, or manly self-defence."

Soon after his arrival at Luxembourg, Don John had sent to announce his coming to the States-General, and towards the end of November, he informed them he should enter Namur, attended by fifty mounted troopers. Permission was resolutely refused till the new Governor had complied with the demands of the States, and a deputation from the States-General came to Luxembourg to declare what these demands were; but each side being ready to take offence, the opening proceedings hardly ended without mutual hostilities.

However, early in December, the States presented their requests on paper, viz., the immediate removal of the troops, with the understanding that they were never to return; the immediate release of all prisoners; the maintenance of the Ghent treaty; an Act of Amnesty; the convocation of the States-General (on the same basis as that on which it rested before the abdication of Charles V.); and an oath from Don John to maintain all the charters and customs of the land. Don John answered that he would send away the troops, but at the same time the States must disband their own; nor would he promise not to recall the foreign soldiers if occasion required. As for their privileges he would govern *as in the time of his Imperial father*. He would settle some act of amnesty afterwards with the State Council. He was ready for a general peace, on condition that the King's authority and the supremacy of the Romish Church were properly secured.

Also the States-General might assemble if sufficient pledges were given that nothing injurious to the King's authority or the Romish Church were transacted by them.

Nothing decided followed these first negotiations. Don John had betrayed his anxiety that the soldiers should depart by sea, and the suspicion of the States was roused, although they then knew nothing of his wish to invade England. So they now said that they could not furnish the number of ships required in order to send away so large a force by sea ; and with regard to the Ghent treaty, that eleven Professors of Theology and Doctors of every court in Louvain, declared that the Treaty contained nothing against the supremacy of the Catholic religion. The various bishops and pastors of the Netherlands made a like decision. An elaborate paper (drawn up at the request of the States-General) declared that there was nothing in the Ghent treaty derogatory to the supreme authority of His Majesty.

The Brussels Union.—While these deliberations were pending, early in January, 1577, the celebrated "Union of Brussels" was formed ; an important agreement, of which the object was to engage those who signed it to compass the immediate expulsion of the Spaniards, the maintenance of the Ghent treaty, the Catholic religion and the King's authority, and the defence of the Fatherland and its constitutions. This new act was signed by *all* the leading individuals of all the Provinces, in order to show such a united expression of strength that Don John would be forced to submit to the demands of the States. In a short time, every province except Luxembourg had filled the document with signatures. This "Brussels Union" had the sanction of the whole people to give it force, while the Ghent treaty, important as it was, had been only concluded between Holland and Zeland, and a certain number of provinces.

The perpetual Treaty. Efforts of Don John to gain over the Prince.—Negotiations with Don John of Austria (who was now at Huy) were soon resumed, the Envoys demanding three things, viz. :—Would Don John at once dismiss the troops and that *by land*? And was he willing to approve all the articles of the Ghent treaty? Don John replied in so complex a manner, that early next morning, January, the 25th, the deputies waited on his Highness, and asked him plainly by word of mouth whether he intended to maintain the treaty? Thus pressed, he answered, “No, he could not;” whereupon a fierce debate ensued, and Don John broke out into furious anger.

From hot words they nearly came to blows. Don John, seizing a heavy silver bell from the table, was about to throw it at the head of one of the deputies, when one of the Imperial envoys interfered to stop the disgraceful scene. Thus mutually angry, they separated, and the Envoys of the States did not regain their good temper by being wakened from sleep that night by a fruitless message from Don John.

Next day as they were mounting their horses to return to Brussels, another message was brought them from the Governor. He would agree to maintain the Ghent treaty on condition that the Ecclesiastical authorities and the University of Louvain gave him satisfactory assurance that it contained nothing derogatory to the Romish Religion, and that the State Council, the Bishop of Liege, and the Imperial Envoys must likewise assure him that it was no-wise prejudicial to His Majesty's authority. As all this had already been done, the deputies again waited on the Governor, had an amicable interview, and in the end, ‘with immense reluctance,’ the memorable treaty called the Perpetual Edict was signed at a place named Marche-en-Famine, the 12th of February, 1577, and it was also signed at Brussels on the 17th of the same month.

This document was issued in Philip's name, and confirmed the treaty of Ghent, in consideration that the prelates, clergy, also the Doctors of Louvain, had decided that nothing in the treaty conflicted with the supremacy of the King or the Roman Catholic Church. The Spanish soldiers were to depart within forty days, the Germans and others were to do so as soon as arrangements had been made by the States-General for their payment. All prisoners on both sides were to be set free except the Count Von Buren, eldest son of the Prince of Orange, who was to be released as soon as the Prince should fulfil certain conditions to be resolved on by the States-General. All the charters and rights of the Netherlands were to be maintained. The States were to disband their troops, and to take an oath to maintain the Catholic Religion; also Don John was to be received as Governor-General as soon as the Spanish, Italian, and Burgundian troops should have departed.

These were the main provisions of the Perpetual Treaty, which was confirmed by Philip a few weeks after.

Meantime the Commissioners sent a deputation to ask the opinion of the Prince of Orange concerning the treaty, and yet signed it before receiving his answer. He was justly indignant and disappointed, for he had no faith in Don John, nor was his distrust without reason, since by many intercepted letters written by Don John himself, by Philip, and others, the Prince was aware of designs to get possession of the citadels, and then force the country to submission. He was, with reason, irritated at the haste with which the States had concluded the treaty with Don John, believing that all which had been signed and sworn to would only be observed till Don John wished to break the agreement.

In the Perpetual Edict the Prince saw the Treaty of

Ghent undone. The thought of all the dead who were martyred at Harlem, at Leyden, at Antwerp, warned him against any alliance with a tyranny as crafty as it was pitiless, therefore the Prince refused to ratify the Perpetual Edict in Holland or Zeland.

He returned an elaborate answer to the States-General, complaining that the ratification of the Ghent treaty had been made dependent on a crowd of deceitful subterfuges; that the laws of the land had been set at naught by the violation of the ancient privilege of the States-General to assemble at pleasure; and by the continued detention of the Count von Buren; and he also vehemently denounced the course taken by the States in agreeing to pay the wages of the foreign soldiers from whom they had received such monstrous injuries; and in allowing them to depart with booty gained by robbery, rebellion, and murder. Yet he promised to sign the Treaty in the name of Holland and Zeland, if the States-General would solemnly pledge themselves not to recognise Don John, and to expel the foreign soldiers by force of arms if the Spaniards did not take their departure by the time agreed on.

Don John was most anxious to conciliate the Prince. "This is the pilot who guides the bark," wrote he to Philip. "He alone can save or destroy it." He now sent an envoy privately to the Prince, charged to represent the dangers which he (Don John) had risked in coming without an escort into the midst of the Netherlands, by which the Prince might see he was earnestly bent on effecting a peace in the country. It was now in the Prince's power to do the Crown a service, and assure the prosperity of his family; it was now his duty to lay down his arms and do his utmost to maintain peace and the Catholic religion, in which case Don John would be his very good friend, and do more for him than he could

imagine. If he would write to him he should be sure to receive a satisfactory answer. '

"The name of your Majesty is as much abhorred and despised in the Netherlands as that of the Prince of Orange is loved and feared. I am negotiating with him, for I see that the establishment of peace and the Catholic religion, and obedience to your Majesty, depend now upon him. Things have reached such a pass, that 'tis necessary to make a virtue of necessity."

In such wise Don John wrote to Philip. He could not imagine that, once assured of pardon and advancement, William of Orange could refuse the friendship of the King. Thus he sent successive envoys to the Prince, begging him to think gravely on what he suggested, and to pray that God would inspire him with good resolutions.

Next day the Prince told the Envoy that, having prayed to God for assistance, he was more than ever convinced that it was his duty to lay the whole matter before the States, whose servant he was. That he could not forget the deaths of Horn and Egmont, nor the broken promises of the Duchess Margaret; and he spoke of information he had received that there was a determination to make war on him and the Estates of Holland and Zeland. He was well aware that a Papal Nuncio had arrived in the Netherlands; and he mentioned several articles in the treaty calculated to excite distrust, particularly the clause engaging to maintain the Catholic religion.

But Don John did not yet despair of gaining the Prince, and greatly desired a personal interview with him. "I do not see any remedy to preserve the State from destruction save to gain over this man who has so much influence with the nation," wrote he to the King. The Prince, in truth, was looked up to and honoured by the whole population, and nothing would have been easier for him than to betray

his country. "You cannot imagine how much it will be in my power to do for you," wrote Don John to the Prince.

Noble character of Orange.—True, Orange had the opportunity to gain all the world has to offer; riches, power, pomp, luxury, rewards for himself and his family, in exchange for poverty, unnumbered anxieties, outlawry, continued risk of assassination, if he would only consent to betray the hearts who trusted in him. Little, indeed, could Don John understand, filled as he was with the idea of his own schemes for his own advancement, that he was dealing with a man of such a noble soul that the things he offered as tempting baits were absolutely without the power to influence the Prince or touch his exalted nature. What William of Orange lived for was not personal advancement and this world's dignities, but to rescue a nation from oppression, to secure peace and freedom to its inhabitants. To win these things for his country he was content to suffer, to lose ease, wealth, and this world's dignities, to run the constant peril of assassination. Indeed, the immortal Prince lived in a region and breathed an air unknown to Don John of Austria.

In reply to the two letters of Don John, Orange thanked his Highness with grave irony for inviting him to a tranquil life, but said that the promises he had made to the poor Netherlanders were of more importance to him. That he had always regarded the public welfare as infinitely beyond his own, "having always placed his particular interests under his feet, even as he was still resolved to do, as long as life should endure."

Departure of Foreign Troops.—Meantime Don John came to Louvain, and entered into society, where his handsome face and winning manners produced an immense effect in his favour. Banquets and military sports suc-

ceeded each other, and great excitement prevailed when Don John enrolled himself as a competitor in some of the trials of skill. The people deluded in the midst of their rejoicings did not foresee that the war which had been already carried on for ten years was to be prolonged during their own and their children's life-time.

It was difficult to collect money to transport the Spanish soldiers from the Netherlands, but it was done at last by Don John's earnest entreaties, part being advanced by himself, and 150,000 florins furnished by the States, besides the sum contributed by Philip or borrowed in his name.

These troops finally left the country at the end of April, the people's joy at seeing them go being kept within bounds by the reflection that even yet their departure might be a pretence, and that 10,000 German troops remained. The first place evacuated by the Spanish soldiers was the citadel of Antwerp, the command of this important fortress being conferred on the Duke of Aerschot, a man trusted by neither party in the Netherlands. Young Egmont and other prisoners were at the same time liberated.

CHAPTER XX.

DON JOHN RECEIVED AS GOVERNOR-GENERAL—HIS REAL INTENTIONS AND CHARACTER.

DON JOHN made his triumphal entry into Brussels on the 1st of May. Everybody rejoiced, for the Spanish troops were gone, and after a brilliant festival Don John at length was received as Governor-General of the Netherlands. But in truth though he accepted the garlands, triumphal arches and banquets, with smiles, in his heart he detested the Netherlands. In all his letters he spoke of the people with abhorrence, and he had only come amongst them to further his own schemes on England. His secretary, Escovedo, shared his master's sentiments fully, and they both wrote unreservedly to Antonio Perez, the most confidential secretary of Philip, one of the most treacherous and unscrupulous men in the treacherous Spanish Court.

Perez. His treachery, and efforts to assassinate Orange. This man Perez deceived alike Escovedo, Don John and Philip. Don John soon began to complain that no man in the Netherlands trusted him, that he sorely needed money, that there was but one man in the Netherlands, and that man was the Prince of Orange. *He* was the actual Governor of the country, therefore Don John advised Philip to make preparations for a "rude and terrible war." "They say publicly that your Majesty is not to be feared," he wrote, "not being capable of carrying on a war, having exhausted every resource."

The English envoy in the Netherlands, Mr. Rogers, had expressed much uneasiness at the possible departure of the Spanish troops by sea, as they might then attempt the liberation of the Queen of Scots, but Don John had ridiculed the idea, saying "truly it was a subject for laughter, that if affairs went as he hoped, he trusted to go to England for the purpose of kissing Her Majesty's (Elizabeth's) hand,"—and he then begged for her portrait." Yet all this time he was full of the idea of dethroning her. A month later, when the soldiers had departed by land and his hopes were gone, he began to bewail himself, and his Secretary wrote to Philip to say that a woman would fill the office of the Regent of the Netherlands far better than Don John, for there was nothing for him to do there. Any one who was Governor of the Provinces, must now do exactly as he was desired by the people. He implored Perez to obtain Philip's consent for Don John to quit the Netherlands, and Don John himself wrote to Perez to the same effect.

Perez showed all their letters to Philip, and then pretended that he hardly dared breathe a word of them to the king. He wrote that "he had ventured into the water" by praising Don John warmly, but that the king was resolute on the impossibility of his leaving the Netherlands. He concluded his letter with the earnest advice, that the Prince of Orange should be assassinated as soon as possible. Let it never be "absent from your minds that a good occasion must be found for finishing Orange, since besides the service which will be thus rendered to our master and to the States, it will be worth something to ourselves."

Escovedo in reply prayed Perez to believe him incapable of neglecting his advice. "You know that the finishing of Orange is very near my heart. You may

believe that I have never forgotten it, and never will forget it till the deed be done." Little did Escovedo imagine that his supposed friend Perez was about to finish *him*. Don John, who from the first had imagined a conspiracy was on foot to deprive him of his liberty, wrote to the King that if he were compelled to remain in the Netherlands against his will, he gave warning that one day he might do something to astonish everybody. "The people here are *bewitched* by the Prince of Orange. They love him, they fear him, and wish to have him for their master. They take no resolution without consulting him," he added.

The Prince's Mother and his Son, Count von Buren.
Sacrifices of the Prince's family.—Whilst the Prince was animating the whole nation, his friends and his mother became more and more uneasy about the dangers to which he was exposed. But troubled as this noble lady was for her son's safety, she was as anxious that no peace should be secured at the price of forfeiting religious liberty. "My heart longs for certain tidings from my lord, for methinks the peace now in prospect will prove but an oppression for soul and conscience. I trust my heart's dearly-beloved lord and son will be supported by Divine Grace to do nothing against God and his soul's salvation. 'Tis better to lose the temporal than the eternal." Thus she wrote to him. His son, the Count Von Buren, still sent him messages of affection from Spain whenever he could. On one occasion the Captain of the Spanish guard dared to speak disrespectfully of the Prince of Orange in his presence, and the young Count, seizing the man by the waist, hurled him from the window. Unfortunately the rash act killed the soldier on the spot.

Count John of Nassau was now sorely pressed for money; he and his brothers had spent at least six hundred thousand florins in the Netherland cause, had mortgaged

land, sold plate and furniture, and taken even the chains and jewels from the necks of their wives and daughters and their mother, and Count John felt obliged to write to his brother Orange, to ask him to obtain from the provinces of Holland and Zeland some acknowledgement of their obligations to him. Thus the Prince had at the same time to comfort his mother, his son, his brother, and his people.

Further efforts of Don John to influence the Prince. The latter's firmness.—At the same time Orange received another urgent embassy from Don John. Meetkercke, one of the commissioners, was the first to speak. He said he had been sent to the Prince to express Don John's good intentions, and to entreat the Prince to unite with Holland, Zeland, and the sister Provinces in common allegiance to his Majesty. His Highness proposed to advise with them concerning the proper means of convoking the States-General.

The Prince begged the commissioners to write down what they said, but after whispering together they refused. "We will have nothing save in black and white," said the Prince; "otherwise things will be misinterpreted. Ye have denied my authority over Utrecht, because it was not expressly mentioned in the treaty of Ghent."

"Neither the Council of State nor the Court of Mechlin consider Utrecht as belonging to your Highness' government," answered the envoys.

"Neither the Council of State nor the Court of Mechlin have anything to do with the matter," replied the Prince. "Tis in my commission and all the world knows it." He afterwards spoke of his son detained in a distant land; of his own property at Breda withheld from him; of the garrisons of German mercenaries; of the citadels (those nests of tyranny) not yet demolished; of estates confiscated; of the

Edicts suspended yet actually in full vigour. "Ye accuse me of distrust," he cried, "but while the castles of Ghent, of Antwerp, and Namur are standing, and so many more, 'tis yourselves who show how utterly ye are without confidence in any permanent and peaceful arrangement."

"And what is it that your Excellency most desires? By what means will it be possible for the government fully to give you contentment?" asked one of the envoys.

"I wish the full execution of the Ghent treaty," answered the Prince, adding, "that after the assembling of the States-General, articles for mutual security could be proposed." Here Doctor Leoninus, one of the envoys, intimated that it would be better not to assemble them at all, as so many persons collected together might give rise to a disturbance. After much hot discussion, the envoys complaining that the Prince desired to make war on them, and he retorting that on their side there were fifteen provinces and Spain against two provinces,—“what had they to fear?” they asked, “if the Prince meant to submit to the decision of the Estates touching religion?” “No, we do not!” replied the Prince; “we see you intend our extirpation, and we don’t mean to be extirpated.” The contest was actually the same that it had ever been. Philip consented to grant everything, provided his authority and the Romish religion were paramount; while the Prince claimed the two things he had always claimed, religious freedom and the ancient Constitution of the country.

Don John’s deputies continued to insist that Orange should publish the Perpetual Treaty in Holland and Zeland, that he should not try to reduce Amsterdam to his jurisdiction, nor diffuse his heretical doctrines, and that the question of religion was to be reserved for the States-General. The Prince in reply, maintained that the perpetual Treaty was very different from the Ghent treaty,

CHAPTER XXI.

NAMUR.

Few cities of the Netherlands were more picturesquely situated or more sprucely built than Namur. It stood at the confluence of two rivers, the Sambre and the Meuse, while far above the city and the lovely country surrounding it rose the mighty fortress, which, even in our day, appears to threaten destruction to all beneath it. It was this famous citadel which Don John wished to seize. The Queen of Navarre, Margaret de Valois, a sister worthy of Charles IX., was going to the baths of Spa, under pretence of drinking the waters, and as her road lay through Namur, Don John, attended by a band of gentlemen, rode out to meet her.

The fact was that Margaret had in reality come to intrigue for her brother, the Duke d'Alençon, and she had soon induced the governor of the Citadel of Cambray, the Seigneur d'Inchy, to hold the castle only for the Duc d'Alençon. At Mons she was received by the governor of Hainault and his wife; and such was her influence over them, that at the end of a week they agreed that Flanders had been too long separated from France, to whom it of right belonged. From Mons she had journeyed to Namur, and Don John, as he rode out to meet her, did not imagine

he saw one enemy the more.

He was dazzled with the magnificence of the appointed her.

A grand banquet was given next day in her honour, and a water party on the day following, a festival being arranged on an island in the river, Don John little thinking that her sole object in entering his dominions was to corrupt his people, and to undermine his authority. He wished, for his part, to make use of her presence to cover his own secret designs. On pretence of meeting her he had come to Namur, and hardly was she out of sight on her way to Liege when he galloped to the citadel. Armed men had been concealed by his orders in the woods near, and he had already sent his friend Berlaymont, to the governor of the castle of Namur, to say that as he, Don John, was going by to the hunt, it would be but proper to offer him, as Governor-General, the hospitality of the castle. The Castellan suspected nothing, and received Don John at breakfast, during which repast the hidden soldiers stole up the hill. Suddenly, at a given signal, Don John, Berlaymont, and the four sons of the latter drew their swords, while the soldiers before mentioned entered. The Castellan was then informed by Don John, that as Governor of the land, he commanded the surrender of the fortress, and that this must be considered the first day of his assuming the government.

Taken by surprise, and thus ordered to yield by the lawful Governor-General, the Castellan obeyed, and, with his feeble garrison, was immediately turned out of the castle. Thus Don John secured for himself the stronghold of Namur, a fortress which the Prince of Orange had constantly warned the people not to leave in the hands of a few cripples (and such the garrison virtually had been).

Don John attempts to seize the Citadel of Antwerp.—Don John had also made plans for getting the Antwerp citadel into his power, and he now proceeded to put them into execution. He had insisted on the Duke of Aerschot

(commander of that fortress) accompanying him to Namur, and directed Colonel Van Ende (a man who had joined the rebel soldiers in the Antwerp Fury), to go to Antwerp and act in co-operation with those who commanded the forces stationed within that city. They were to seize the citadel for Don John.

Father William.—Before relating the issue of this plot, we will return for a moment to the Prince of Orange. The people of Holland and Zeland had been busily occupied, in their brief breathing space from war, in thoroughly reconstructing their dykes at immense labour and expense. When this stupendous work was finished, the Prince, at the request of the inhabitants, paid a visit to each city. The homage offered him did not take the shape of banners and triumphal arches, but the expression of the gratitude of thousands of hearts. “Father William has come!” cried men, women, and children to each other; and happy were they who heard his voice and touched his hand. He was like a father visiting his children; his words were full of tenderness, nor were any of the people so humble as to be forbidden to approach him.

It was he who had saved their land, their homes, from Spanish tyranny, he who had put down the cruel Inquisition, he who had tried to unite them all, he who had for their sakes mortgaged his estates, deprived himself of riches, almost of food and clothes. He was still directing the labours of the States-General, who, more than ever, looked to him for guidance. He warned them most earnestly to hold to the treaty of Ghent as their anchor in the storm. He entreated them not to be seduced by these artifices of Don John, now that he had seized Namur Castle, accusing him (the Prince) of violating the peace and countenancing attempts against his life; but to put away all considerations which might obscure their judgment; to

maintain the safety of their wives and children and their own liberties; to see that the poor people, whose eyes were fixed on them, did not perish.

While in North Holland the Prince was urged to visit Utrecht by the magistrates of that place, though his authority had not yet been acknowledged there. His wife, the Princess of Orange, accompanied him, with anxious forebodings for his safety. As they entered the gates of the ancient city, in the midst of an immense concourse of people, a shot passed through the carriage window and struck the Prince's breast. The Princess threw her arms round his neck, crying out that they were betrayed; but, happily, the alarm was groundless, and the panic did not spread; a wad from one of the cannons fired in his honour had struck the Prince, who, unfearing, passed on amidst the whole population who had come out to welcome "their Father." This visit decided the citizens of Utrecht to accept the dominion of Orange.

Breda gained for the Estates—Antwerp delivered from the Foreign Soldiery.—Much fruitless correspondence had meantime taken place between Don John and the States. The former made bitter complaints and many demands, one of which was that, while he himself had faithfully executed the treaty of Ghent, the Prince had in nowise observed it, and that the States should therefore cease to hold any communication with him. The deputies replied that Don John had not executed the treaty, in that it provided for the disbanding of the German troops and the assembly of the States-General, both which provisions he had opposed.

It will be remembered that the traitor Van Ende had been commissioned by Don John to act in concert with the troops in Antwerp to effect the seizure of the citadel. He was, however, refused admission into the town by

the magistrates; and an officer of the garrison in the citadel, Captain de Bours, offered to take the fortress for the States.

The Governor who had succeeded Champagny in the city of Antwerp was named Martini; he was a warm partisan of Orange, and with him De Bours arranged his plot. The leading mercantile houses furnished a large sum of money to bribe the garrison, and the 1st of August was fixed for the attempt, which, after a brief combat, was successful. The castle was taken; but for a short period there was great danger that the German troops quartered in the city would rise and repeat the Antwerp Fury. They had assembled in arms in the Place de Mer, when the leading merchants offered 300,000 crowns to pay great part of the arrears of their wages on condition that they should, at once and for ever, evacuate the city.

The merchants stood on the bridge with the gold in their hands, when sails were observed in the distance, and presently a large fleet of war came up the Scheldt. It was part of the Prince's fleet under Admiral Haultain who had been sent against Tholen, but having received secret news of what was going on at Antwerp, he had seized this opportunity to help the Prince's party. A sudden panic spread among the soldiers, who, crying, "The Beggars are coming!" actually fled while the merchants still stood ready to pay the money, and the envoys from the citadels waved their flag of truce. The flight of the soldiers was ludicrous; without an instant's delay for packing their property, they plunged into the Scheldt or across the dykes or fields, and the city was thus suddenly delivered, for the first time for twelve years, from the misery of a foreign soldiery.

A further result followed; for, some flying to Breda, a letter from Don John to their colonel, Fronsberger, was intercepted by Orange during their flight to that place;

the Prince most ingeniously substituted another, prepared with great skill by a printer of Antwerp (Sylvius), in which Don John was made to direct Fronsberger to do the best he could for himself, as no help could be rendered him. The effect of this counterfeit letter was such that the troops rose on their leader and surrendered him, with the city and their own arms, into the custody of the Estates. Thus Breda was gained as well as Antwerp, and the rage of the Governor-General was excessive.

Ridiculous Demands of Don John.—Don John now addressed a long letter to the States, making exorbitant demands; viz., that all the forces of the country should be placed under his command, that the people of Brabant and Flanders should forthwith apply themselves to the discovery and chastisement of heretics, that the citadel of Antwerp should be at once delivered into his hands; that the Prince of Orange should be forced to suppress the exercise of the Reformed religion in Harlem and other places, with many other equally preposterous requirements.

The Estates, who had evidence of his deceit through many intercepted letters, were amazed at these demands, made with as much audacity as if he had the upper hand, and had fulfilled the Treaty of Ghent instead of having openly violated it. Don John had written to the Estates on the 7th of August, and before receiving their answer wrote again (on the 13th of the same month), professing that he was most ready to leave the land if the King would appoint his successor; that his intentions were most honest, that he abhorred war more than anything else in the world, but that the question of peace or war rested not with him but with themselves. The Estates answered this letter recapitulating old grievances, and asking him whether they could believe (after the evidence of his own intercepted letters), that it was his intention to maintain the Ghent Treaty, or indeed any treaty.

Many letters of this kind were exchanged between the States and the Governor-General, the latter was known to be enrolling fresh soldiers to supply the place of those who were gone ; and he had written to Milan to recall the Spanish troops. Yet the Estates were still willing to treat with him if he would disband his soldiers, dismiss all foreigners from office, send the Germans out of the country, and govern only by the advice and consent of the State Council. For it was the opinion of Orange that the administration of the State Council, which ought of right to be appointed by the States-General, should be restored. He wished to strengthen the body of citizens, and make the government actually rest in the hands of the people.

Destruction of the Antwerp Citadel and other Fortresses.—While this correspondence between Don John and the States was going on, an event occurred in Antwerp which gave the Prince heart-felt satisfaction. The authorities, or rather the citizens, moved by the late attempt to gain the citadel, and by the remembrance of the Spanish Fury, determined to take the Prince's advice and destroy the fortress. Ten thousand of the citizens, magistrates, nobles, great ladies, citizens' wives, even the beggars, worked from morning to night in demolishing the place where so many murders had been committed. This set an example to other places, and the castle of Ghent was levelled, as well as several other fortresses.

The correspondence still continued between Don John and the Estates ; and the Estates-General now sent two detailed letters to Philip, setting forth past evils, and asking for a remedy. They added that they would try to bring about a reconciliation with Don John, but should the estrangement be irremediable, they begged his Majesty to send a Prince of the blood in his place.

CHAPTER XXII.

THE PRINCE INVITED TO BRUSSELS.—NEGOTIATIONS WITH DON JOHN.

ELEVEN years had passed since the Prince of Orange had entered Brussels, for he had been condemned as an outlaw by Philip. Now, however, the Estates-General invited him back to aid them with his advice. The scene was indeed changed. The proscribed Prince had arrived at victory through many defeats. He was going to the place where the Blood Council had summoned him to trial and had passed on him the sentence of death.

The envoys sent to invite the Prince presented him with a brief document which informed him, that the States-General, knowing how efficacious would be his presence, united in supplication that he would transport himself to the city of Brussels, there to advise with them concerning the necessities of the land. They requested at the same time that he would give leave to introduce the Roman Catholic religion into Holland and Zeland. (On this the Prince referred them to the Estates of those provinces.) They asked also that the exercise of the Reformed religion should not be "*procured*" in the other provinces. To this the Prince replied that it should not be *prevented*.

Only with great difficulty was the consent to his journey obtained from Holland and Zeland, and the Princess of Orange, with many tears, saw her husband depart for that capital where lurked so many of his foes, and where so

many of his friends had fallen. By command of the Estates, prayers were daily offered for his safety in all the churches of Holland and Zeland. He arrived at Antwerp the 17th of September, without even a body guard ; but the whole population formed a body guard round him, receiving him with extraordinary enthusiasm ; and here he spent five days. On September the 23rd a vast number of citizens attended him to the new canal which led to Brussels, and where three barges were ready for himself and his suite.

As the Prince neared Brussels he was met, when several miles from the city, by nearly half its inhabitants. It was the proudest day of his life. Representatives from all the provinces joined with the people in greeting "Father William." His first act was to stop the negotiations with Don John. Fresh envoys had been sent to the latter, and at the moment of the Prince's arrival had brought terms which seemed likely to be accepted. The Prince added new conditions. By these, besides maintaining the Ghent treaty and the Perpetual Edict, Don John was required to abandon Namur Castle, to dismiss the German troops, to prohibit the entrance of fresh ones, to release captives, restore confiscated property, to give up all fortresses ; and while waiting for his successor he was to reside in Luxembourg, there to be governed entirely by the decisions of the State Council.

Don John was overcome with rage and mortification. The Royal authority set aside by the State Council, a Council appointed at the dictation of the Prince ! and the Governor-General to remain inactive in Luxembourg while the arch rebel ruled in the capital ! Naturally war followed. A pamphlet containing an account of the proceedings between the Estates and Don John was published in seven different languages and sent to every potentate in Christen-

dom, by order of the States-General. Don John likewise published his own account of the matter.

The Archduke Matthias.—We must now notice another complication which arose from the proceedings of the States. The Emperor Maximilian was dead, and had been succeeded by his son Rudolph, who had a brother, the Archduke Matthias, now twenty years old. Many of the Catholic nobles in the Netherlands, growing jealous of the power of Orange, secretly invited this youth as Governor to Brussels. At this time, Elizabeth of England showed the warmest friendship for the Prince, and even sent costly presents to the Princess of Orange.

When the invitation reached the young Archduke, he resolved at once on accepting it, and set off from Vienna, October the 3rd, 1577. As he shared the same room with his brother the Emperor, he waited till the latter was asleep, then without even putting on his slippers he escaped from the room at midnight. The friends who arranged his flight had provided a disguise for him. In a servant's dress, and with his face blackened, he arrived at Cologne. When it became known, Don John was furious, and the Queen of England most indignant. She directed her secretary to inform the Netherland envoy that she should feel compelled to withdraw all succour from the States, if the Prince of Orange were deprived of his leadership.

The Envoy answered that the great nobles unanimously desired a new Governor-General, and hoped that by choosing the Emperor's brother, both the Emperor and the King of Spain would agree to the choice made. That moreover, the Prince of Orange thought it unwise to insult the Imperial house, by treating the Archduke with any indignity now that the invitation had been given. The secretary (Walsingham) replied that the only condition

upon which the Queen would continue her alliance with the Netherlands was, that the Prince must be appointed Lieutenant-General for the Archduke. The consequence of all this was, that Matthias was received at Antwerp by the Prince at the head of 2,000 cavalry and an immense crowd of citizens.

The Prince made Ruward.—The next step resulting from the Archduke's arrival was the election of the Prince as Ruward of Brabant, an office of great dignity and authority, and one generally conferred on the natural heir to the sovereignty. Such persons as had formerly held this office had usually reigned afterwards. A Ruward was not exactly dictator, or governor, or stadtholder, but was in a measure superior in power to either. The province of Brabant had no special governor, since the Governor-General resided in the capital; but in this peculiar condition of affairs there was an opportunity for conferring honour and power on the Prince, who was confirmed in the office of Ruward, the 22nd of October, to the boundless satisfaction of the people. The Estates of Flanders had several times elected the Prince their Stadtholder, but he had as constantly refused the dignity. On the 7th of December, 1577, the States-General formally declared that Don John was no longer Stadtholder, Governor or Captain-general, but an infractor of the peace which he had sworn to maintain, and an enemy of the fatherland. All who should give him help or favour were declared rebels and traitors. Thus war was to recommence.

The new or nearer Union of Brussels.—On the 10th of December, a new act of union was signed at Brussels, which went beyond the Ghent act; for this new union bound those of the Romish church, and those no longer of that faith, to respect and protect each other against all enemies whatsoever. The Reformers now came forth from

their hiding places, and openly celebrated their worship. This act was called "The New or Nearest Union of Brussels."

The Queen of England sends forces to aid the Netherlands.—In January 1578, Elizabeth of England agreed to send 5,000 infantry and 1,000 cavalry to the Provinces, under an officer of high rank, and to lend them her credit for one year, to raise 100,000 pounds sterling, but these troops, though furnished by the Queen, were to be paid by the Provinces.

The Archduke's power strictly limited. Don John's rage. He takes the field against the Netherlanders.—It had been arranged that the Archduke Matthias should be received as Governor-General, but no power whatever was in reality accorded to the young man who had come so far to seek it. His power was almost limited to signing the acts which were countersigned by Orange. The Archduke was to take an oath of allegiance to the States-General at the same time that he did so to the King; and he could conclude nothing concerning the affairs of the nation without the consent of the States-General, which might assemble when, where, and as often as they might think expedient; also the Estates of each particular province were to assemble at their pleasure. These likewise were to have absolute control over levying and expending the common funds of the country.

Thus the actual power of government was left with the States-General, and no authority with the King, except the right to approve their measures; while the Governor-General had no power to act alone in any matter. The Prince of Orange was appointed Lieutenant-General for the Archduke, and continued in his office of Ruward.

Then followed the formal inauguration of the young Archduke, with much rejoicing, while Don John of Austria was still at Namur, half frenzied with rage. Well might

he rage! for while he, himself, the representative of the King, was virtually locked up in a fortress, the Prince of Orange reigned supreme in Brussels, and had an Imperial Archduke for his Secretary. Don John however, was not idle. He wrote to the Emperor, and also issued a proclamation in French, German, and Flemish, declaring that he intended to re-establish his Majesty's authority and the down-trodden religion of Rome, summoning all citizens and soldiers to join his banners, and offering pardon for past offences.

Action near Gemblours.—The army of Don John had been steadily growing in numbers and now amounted to 20,000 disciplined troops, Alexander of Parma, Mansfield, Mondragon, Mendoza, and other distinguished officers being amongst them. On the other hand the military affairs of the Netherlands were in confusion. The Netherlanders had assembled nearly the same number of troops as Don John, but had no such experienced officers.

The forces of Don John mustered at Marche, in Luxembourg; those of the States assembled a few miles from Namur, whence, on the last day of January, they fell back on Gemblours, a place nine miles from Namur. Don John followed, and came up with the rear of his enemy before the winter day was far advanced. Then selecting 600 cavalry and 1,000 infantry (all picked men), he divided them in two bodies and placed them under the command of an officer, Gonzaga, and of the celebrated Mondragon, with orders to hang on the enemy's rear and do him all possible damage, but to avoid a general engagement till the main army should arrive.

In the midst of the skirmishing Alexander of Parma rode up, and saw at once that the columns of the enemy were marching irregularly in order to avoid being precipitated into a deep ravine filled with mire and water, as

broad and more dangerous than a river. Observing their confusion, he was quick to take advantage of the opportunity. Mounting a fresh and powerful horse he plunged into the ravine "to perish there," as he said himself, "or come forth victorious." In a moment more he gained the opposite bank, and halted there till his troops had forced a passage. Then ordering the assault of the enemy in flank and rear at the same instant, the centre of the States' army was attacked by the division led by Parma himself.

It is painful to recount the panic which seized the Netherland troops, who were thrown at once into utter disorder. In an hour and a-half all was over, they were exterminated; while hardly a Spaniard was wounded. The whole army was routed, and everything belonging to them fell into the enemy's hands. Don John showed no more humanity than his predecessors, and of the six hundred captives some were drowned in the Meuse, some hanged, some hurled off the bridge at Namur, but none were granted their lives. Seven or eight thousand dead bodies were left on the field of battle. To account for this great disaster, and the flight of the Netherland troops, we must remember that they were not only assailed unexpectedly, but that the Spanish troops were the best disciplined in the world and were commanded by the greatest generals of the age; while the rank and file of the Netherland army were chiefly mercenaries, and their principal commanders that day were absent at the wedding of the heiress of the Marquis Berghen.

CHAPTER XXIII.

DON JOHN GAINS MANY TOWNS, BUT THE PRINCE GAINS
AMSTERDAM. A TREATY TOLERATING THE REFORMED
FAITH SIGNED AT UTRECHT.

DON JOHN followed up this victory by rapidly reducing the towns of Louvain, Judoigne, Tirlemont, Aerschot, Bouvignes, Sichem, Nivelles, Roeux, Soignies, Binch, Beaumont, Walcourt, Maubeuge, and Chimay. The usual outrages were committed on the unfortunate inhabitants. In Brussels there was intense indignation, for the defeat at Gemblours was, with justice, put down to the intrigues of the Catholic party. With much difficulty Orange succeeded in calming the people by going from house to house to prevent their taking vengeance on the spot against the Catholic nobles as traitors.

All looked on the Prince as the one man who could save them,—no one in the National Assembly thought of opposing anything he might suggest, and all parties joined heartily in measures for the defence of the capital. Don John did not profit so much by his victory as the States gained by their late misfortune, which taught them the necessity of union. Besides, the whole of the towns taken by Don John together were not of so much importance as Amsterdam, which the Prince had so long desired to recover. The civic authorities in this important place had hitherto resisted every effort of the Prince to arrange a "satisfaction;" but, after various attempts, certain deputies

from Utrecht succeeded in arranging terms, February the 8th, 1578, the foundation of the treaty being toleration for the Reformed religion, and the nominal supremacy of the Romish faith. This treaty was hailed with boundless joy in Holland and Zeland, for the national party obtained far more by it than Don John by his victory at Gemblours.

Philip renews his usual demands—War continues.—A special letter now arrived from Philip to the States-General, the tone of which was most cordial, but it contained the two reiterated demands, viz.,—complete supremacy for himself, and that the Catholic religion should be re-established *as it was in the time of his father*, the Emperor Charles V. This implied that the rack, the Inquisition, the gibbet, the scaffold, should be re-established, and Don John immediately issued a proclamation enforcing the King's command.

The States then formally addressed a letter to Philip in the name of the Archduke, demanding the recall of Don John and the maintenance of the treaty of Ghent, declaring in the most positive terms to Philip's envoy their resolution never more to submit to Spanish armies, or to be governed on the principles of Charles V. Meantime preparations for war went on actively. Troops were rapidly collected by the Netherlanders, the chief command being again given to the leading nobles, Aerschot, Bossu, Egmont, Lalain, the Viscount of Ghent, Baron de Ville, and others, some of whom proved traitors. Don John went on eagerly with military preparations also, Philip furnishing him with 1,900,000 dollars, and promising 200,000 more every month—and a larger sum if necessary.

The respective armies at length assembled and advanced towards each other; that of Don John numbering 30,000 troops (most of whom were veteran Spanish and Italian soldiers), while the army of the States hardly numbered

18,000 foot and 2,000 cavalry, under François de la Noue, surnamed "*Bras de Fer*," Count Bossu being commander-in-chief of the forces. These were to muster in the plain between Herenthals and Lier, where they expected to be joined by Duke Casimir, Prince Palatine of Pfalz, at the head of 12,000 German troops. It was Don John's intention to attack the States' army before the Germans could join it. A series of skirmishes followed, as he offered battle day after day, till (on August the 1st) a regular engagement took place, when Philip's troops were obliged to retire after eight hours' fighting, leaving a thousand dead on the field. Don John then fell back towards Namur.

The Duke d'Alençon chosen by the Netherlanders.—It was the 26th of August before Duke Casimir led his 12,000 men to join the States' army near Mechlin. This young prince had married the daughter of Augustus of Saxony. The latter did not approve his son-in-law's expedition to the Netherlands, nor did the Landgrave William of Hesse, to whom Casimir had written for advice. In fact the young duke had no great ability, but was pushed forward by Queen Elizabeth as a Protestant leader, she being more than ever alarmed at the schemes of the Duke d'Alençon.

She had indeed reason to fear that Alençon would strive to gain power in the Netherlands, for in truth the Catholic nobles, jealous of the superior influence of Orange, and averse to the Reformed religion, wished to introduce the French king's brother into the country in order to counterbalance the influence of William the Silent. All the great English statesmen of that time, Walsingham, Burleigh, Knollys, Sidney, Leicester, and others, would have been pleased to see Elizabeth support the Provinces openly; believing that the Netherlands, if ruled by the French, would be more dangerous than the

Netherlands ruled by Philip. But this the Queen would not undertake.

It was not in vain that Margaret de Valois, Alençon's sister, had lately visited Namur, and had won over the Commandant of the citadel of Cambray, besides securing the support of the Governor of Hainault and his wife. François, Duc d'Alençon, a despicable personage, who had earned the contempt of both Papists and Protestants, deserting both as it suited him, was now by his brother's death Duke of Anjou; he was one who, having before fought on the Protestant side, had afterwards sacked and burned the Huguenot town of Issoire in a manner worthy of Alva; such was the man who aspired to marry Elizabeth of England, and had now arrived at Mons to resume his correspondence with the Netherlands.

Peace between the Catholic and Huguenot party, or rather the semblance of it, being restored for a short time in France, Alençon had again gone over for his own purposes to the Protestant side, and since the Prince of Orange could not keep him out of the Netherlands, it became necessary to hold him as much as possible under control. The Duke had despatched envoys to Orange, not to the Archduke Matthias, and had offered his services to the States-General.

Elizabeth was so incensed when she knew of the probable welcome of the French Prince as Governor, that she not only threatened to withdraw her help, but even to take up arms against the Netherlanders if they dared to accept Alençon for their master.

Orange, urged by the force of circumstances, had made an arrangement with Alençon, through the Duke's envoy; the substance of which was, that the Duke should lend his aid against Spanish tyranny, and furnish 10,000 foot and 2,000 horse for this purpose for three months, (after which

time he was required to furnish only 3,000 foot and 500 horse). He was to submit himself to the government of the Provinces in everything, and to make no special treaties or contracts with any province or any city of the Netherlands, and to bring with him none save French troops ; in return for which the States conferred on him the title of "Defender of the Liberty of the Netherlanders against the Tyranny of the Spaniards and their Adherents," and agreed to help him with a like number of troops in case of necessity. Should the States ever accept another Prince as sovereign the Duke's claim was to stand first, on conditions to be arranged afterwards. Thus skilfully, by bestowing a barren title, and strictly limiting his actions, did Orange neutralise the influence of this new enemy.

New Requirements of the States.—Assassination of Escovedo.—Count John of Nassau Governor of Gelderland.—Certain articles drawn up by the States-General were now laid before Don John, requiring him forthwith to leave the land with all his troops and adherents, first surrendering all cities and strongholds in his possession ; also providing that on the death or departure of the Archduke Mathias the king should not appoint a new Governor-General without the consent of the States-General. All prisoners, exiles, and confiscated property, were to be restored.

When Don John heard these hard conditions he was not so full of anger as he would once have been, for his disappointments and anxieties had broken his spirits and health. He was besides helpless, having soldiers but no money with which to pay them, for of course Philip had not kept his promises. Above all Don John had been deeply sorrow-stricken by the news of the assassination of his secretary Escovedo, his most intimate and confidential friend, murdered in Spain by Philip's command.

It was a foul deed, instigated by Perez, who wished to get the Secretary out of the way because he knew too much of his own wrong-doings. He had made the king believe the most extravagant things against Escovedo, viz., that it was Don John's fixed intention (after establishing himself on the throne of England), to attack Philip and deprive him of his crown, and that these designs had been planned by Escovedo.

Without any proofs whatever to substantiate these accusations, Philip ordered the secretary to be secretly assassinated, and after three unsuccessful attempts had been made to poison him, some ruffians were hired to stab him at nightfall in the streets of Madrid. His murderers were all rewarded; one with a hundred crowns in gold; another by a gold chain, fifty doubloons of eight, and a silver cup, together with a situation as under-steward of an estate. This latter, and also the man who had actually done the deed, received (as did also a fourth accomplice) commissions as ensigns in his Majesty's army, with twenty gold crowns of yearly pension. Such were the wages of murder in Spain under Philip's rule.

It was the news of the assassination of Escovedo which cut Don John to the heart, and made him ponder what his own fate might prove to be. He declined entering into any controversy with the States about the articles submitted to him, and only said that they were most iniquitous; that the King would soon send the Duke of Terra Nova to the Emperor of Germany, as His Majesty intended to refer the Netherland difficulty to the Emperor; and that he himself (Don John) was anxiously waiting his recall.

Count John of Nassau, the only remaining brother of the Prince, had been entreated to accept the office of Governor of Gelderland; and, unwilling as he was to

neglect his private affairs, he yet consented. The Prince was, as usual, constantly labouring to introduce religious toleration, and he did not miss the opportunity when a synod of the Reformed Churches was held in June of this year. The result was the draft of a religious peace which, however, suffered many changes before it was adopted in any measure. Meantime the Prince effected a provisional arrangement with the important city of Antwerp, (where religious broils were about to be renewed), by which the adherents of one religion were forbidden to disturb or insult, or in any way interfere with the ceremonies of the other. All were to abstain from mutual jeerings, and from all injuries to ecclesiastical property.

Death of Don John of Austria.—The two armies, both crippled by poverty, were meanwhile watching each other. Alençon was still at Mons; Don John at Namur entirely without funds and in a manner besieged. The latter wrote to a friend at Genoa in the deepest sadness, saying that the French were strengthening themselves in Hainault under Alençon, and that the King of France was ready to march into the country through Burgundy. Four days later he wrote to Philip, telling him that he had been ill four days with fever, but was as weak as if he had been laid up for a month. "I assure your Majesty that the work here is enough to destroy any constitution and any life," he said; adding how often he had warned the King of the designs of the French on the Netherlands. He begged to be informed, "whether he was to attack the enemy in Burgundy, or whether he should await where he was succour from his Majesty; whether he should fight, and if so, which of his enemies; in fact, what he was to do, because, winning or losing, he meant to conform to his Majesty's will." He felt deeply pained, he continued, at being disgraced and abandoned by the King, having served him both as a

brother and as a man, with love, faith, and heartiness. "Our lives are at stake in this game, and all we wish is to close them honourably," he concluded.

Ten days after he died of fever, having been watched over in his last illness by his nephew, Alexander of Parma, whom he appointed to succeed him. Suspicion that he had died of poison arose, but this was never proved ; and, as the pest was raging among his troops, it is not unreasonable to suppose he died by natural means. It had been his last request to Philip, that he might be buried by the side of his Imperial father in the palace of the Escorial. Philip granted this, but to save expense, the body of Don John *was divided into three parts, packed in bags, and hung at the saddle bows of the troopers*, who thus conveyed him through France to his last resting-place ! He died before completing his thirty-third year, after a life spent for the most part in a blaze of military success.

CHAPTER XXIV.

ALEXANDER OF PARMA, GOVERNOR. HIS APPEARANCE AND CHARACTER.

A FIFTH governor was now placed over the Netherlands, one far more fitted to rule than any of the former. Alexander Farnese, Prince of Parma, was (as has been said) the son of Margaret of Parma, once Regent of the Provinces, and of Ottavio Farnese, grandson of Pope Paul III.

When he was only six years old, his own city of Parma was besieged, and was vigorously defended by his father ; the boy had thus grown up amid the clash of arms. At eleven years of age, he had earnestly begged to be allowed to fight as a volunteer at St. Quentin, and had wept when this was refused. His education had been completed at Alcalà and at Madrid, under the eyes of his uncle Philip, and in the companionship of Don John and of Don Carlos. At twenty, we may remember, he had married Maria of Portugal at Brussels, and he had had several children whilst living at Parma. But he found existence so wearisome without fighting, that every night, disguised and armed, and either alone or with a single attendant, he used to sally forth and oblige every passer-by of warlike aspect to stand and measure swords with him. On one occasion, he encountered a renowned swordsman, Count Torelli, when a sudden flash of light from a passing torch revealed to the Count the face of Alexander. Torelli dropped his

sword and entreated forgiveness, and the noise made by this adventure put a stop to Parma's midnight fighting.

When Don John of Austria, his uncle and great friend, went to command the united forces of Rome, Spain, and Venice, Alexander of Parma could no longer be restrained from sharing in the war, and joined Don John just before the battle of Lepanto, where he fought with extraordinary bravery and success. On this occasion he laid his galley alongside the treasure ship of the Turkish fleet, which vessel (because of its importance), was doubly manned and armed. After firing a few broadsides into it, Alexander actually jumped alone on to the enemy's ship, brandishing his immense two-handed sword, with which he mowed a passage for his reluctant followers. This galley as well as another was soon his own, and he secured such a prodigious booty that each of his soldiers received 2,000 or 3,000 ducats.

After this he was not permitted to reap any more victories for some years, and when at length he received the command of the reinforcements sent to Don John, at the close of 1577, he gladly put himself at their head. As we have seen, he took a leading part in the victory of Gemblours, and now he governed in the place of his uncle, Don John. He was of the same age as his late kinsman, nearly thirty-three years old. His appearance corresponded with his warlike character, he having black, close-cropped, bristling hair, dark piercing eyes of dangerous expression, handsome features, aquiline nose, and a round, combative head, alert and snake-like in its movements, and he had moreover the look of a prize-fighter. His mouth and chin were quite hidden by a bushy beard; he was of middle stature, he dressed sumptuously, wore gold-inlaid Milan armour, a ruff of point lace, and the badge of a knight of the Golden Fleece.

Unlike Don John, Parma aimed at no visionary schemes, but knew exactly the kind of work Philip wanted done, and came prepared to do it. Cool, fearless, artful, commanding, he knew how to inspire his soldiers with his own impetuous courage. Such a man could do more than overcome the Netherlands in the open, for he could cope with them by the most subtle policy. As for religion, he looked on all who were not of the Romish faith as mere dogs, and he attended mass daily (going there by torch light in the winter mornings); which did not prevent him hanging, burning, and drowning whole cities full of innocent people if they were heretics. He was very temperate, eating little, and generally interrupting his dinner three or four times to attend to public business.

Unhappy State of Public Affairs.—The discontented Catholic nobles were but too ready to accept Parma's rule. He arrived just at the time when Catholic and Protestant were ready to persecute each other, forgetting their common need of union against tyranny, and their late treaties of peace. The banished Reformers, who had returned in droves, were bitterly disappointed. It was at Ghent that Parma first exercised his authority as Governor. Anjou (that is, Alençon, who by the death of his brother had received the title of Anjou), was at Mons,—which city he had secretly attempted to capture for himself. Duke John of Casimir was at Ghent, and there was a rumour of making him Count of Flanders, with which proposed dignity he was quite dazzled. But Alençon, who wished to be Count of Flanders himself, was indignant, and wrote to the States to express what he felt.

Meanwhile Duke Casimir's soldiers were robbing and pillaging the open country, till hardly anything was left. Alençon, disgusted with the favour shown to Duke Casimir,

disbanded his troops and retired to France. Several thousands of these men took service immediately under Montigny to fight *against* the Netherlanders. The unhappy Provinces were over-run by unpaid soldiers of all kinds, Spaniards, Italians, Burgundians, Walloons, Germans, Scotch, English; some of whom had come to protect and others to attack, but who all alike maltreated the defenceless peasantry and the inhabitants of the smaller towns. The army of the States had been all this time rapidly growing less, till there were hardly men enough to garrison the larger towns or make a stand in the field.

Ghent, unruly, opulent and powerful, the second city in the Netherlands, and one of the richest and most powerful cities of Christendom, was now the centre of discord. The greater part of its inhabitants were of the Reformed religion, and were disposed to make resistance to the malcontents who were led by the disaffected nobles. Ghent, considering itself the head of all the southern provinces, was indignant with the Walloon provinces who had dared to re-assert the supremacy of the Romish religion, and to think once more of admitting friendly relations with a king who had been disowned in reality.

There were two parties in Ghent, both led by men of dangerous character, viz., Imbize, opposed to Orange; and Ryhove, who considered himself a friend to the Prince,—yet this man did deeds which counteracted the lofty efforts and were in direct contradiction to the pure life of the Prince. Being ordered out from Ghent to oppose a force of malcontents gathering near Courtnay, he swore he would not go till two gentlemen, whom he had arrested the previous October had been executed. These prisoners were an ex-procurator named Visch, and Hessels, the Blood-Councillor,—he who had been accustomed to sleep through

his afternoons at the Blood Council and wake up to shout, "To the gallows with him!" The two prisoners were interrupted at a game of chess, hurried to a carriage surrounded by a force of armed men, and hanged without trial a short distance on the road to Courtnay; Ryhove, taunting Hessels with threats once uttered against himself, and tearing out a handful of Hessels' gray beard, fastened it as a plume in his cap.

Such events, with the hatred daily growing more intense between the Ghenters and the Walloons, made it extremely important to arrange some pacification. In the country, the malcontents, on the plea of protecting the Catholic clergy,—were plundering the people, while in Ghent the clergy were maltreated, and the cloisters pillaged under pretence of maintaining liberty. As usual, all eyes turned to Orange, and deputies went to and fro between Antwerp and Ghent.

The Prince laid down three necessary points before any agreement could be made; 1st, the Catholic clergy must be allowed the free use of their property; 2ndly, they must not be disturbed in the exercise of their religion; 3rdly, some gentlemen, imprisoned since October, must be released. If these points were granted, the Archduke Matthias, the States-General, and the Prince of Orange, would drive off the Walloon soldiery, and defend Ghent against all injury.

The first two points were agreed to on condition that guarantees were furnished for the safety of the Reformed religion; the third point was rejected, but it was agreed that the prisoners should have legal trial, and be protected from outrage. On these terms a formal act of acceptance was signed at Antwerp, November the 3rd. But then began murmurs at Ghent. The extreme liberal party had no real intention of establishing the 'religious peace' when they

agreed not to molest the Catholics. The Prince sent messengers summoning the authorities to fulfil the treaty, and on the same day the English envoy made an energetic representation to the magistrates that the conduct of the Ghenters was exciting regret throughout the world, showing that they meant to prolong, not to suppress, the civil war which had raged so long. Such proceedings, said the Envoy, raised doubts whether they were willing to obey any law.

He added, moreover, that Queen Elizabeth thought it still possible to preserve peace by conforming to the counsels of the Prince and the States-General, but Her Majesty warned the Ghenters that their conduct would soon compel her to abandon the cause of their country altogether. Brussels also sent envoys to remonstrate with their sister city on the madness which had seized her, declaring that the inhabitants of Brussels would never desert the Prince, as, next to God, there was no one who understood their cause so entirely, but that the Ghenters had occasioned the Prince to be calumniated as the author of the crimes committed in their city, on account of the office he now held ; at the very time he was urging that he knew of no means to avert the threatened desolation save the union of all the Provinces, and obedience to the general government.

Tumults in Ghent—The Prince procures a Pacification.—But even while the Envoys were remonstrating, a fresh tumult occurred in Ghent. The populace rose on the Catholics, smote their images and pictures, robbed them of valuable property, and turned all Papists out of the city. The riot was so furious, it seemed as if all the inhabitants had gone mad. This fresh act of senseless violence met with the Prince's stern disapprobation. Indeed, he even seriously meditated whether it were not better to leave a

country which seemed so incapable of comprehending his high purposes and efforts, for even in his own Holland there were whispers against him, because he had negotiated with Alençon.

The Prince had this year been chosen Governor of Flanders, but he had again declined to accept the office. He was, however, implored to go to Ghent, where the inhabitants still professed respect for his authority, and, though such a journey was dangerous, he consented, and arrived there December the 4th, and then held constant conferences with the magistrates, and even dined with Imbize, thus smoothing angry passions and reconciling difficulties. He succeeded in obtaining a religious peace, signed the 27th of December, 1578. The Walloons and the Malcontents were now summoned to lay down their arms, yet nothing would satisfy them but the total suppression of the Reformed religion; as in like manner nothing would content Imbize and *his* party but the extinction of the Catholic faith.

Queen Elizabeth had written most reprovingly to Duke Casimir, begging him forthwith to amend his ways, as 'twas not for marauding she had appointed him her lieutenant, and furnished him with troops and subsidies.' It was again the Prince who made Casimir's peace with the States-General, smoothed matters with the extravagant Reformers, and extracted from the Ghenters the £45,000 bond so strongly insisted on as repayment by Elizabeth.

Duke Casimir leaves the Netherlands.—Casimir soon after wrote to the States-General, saying that, as he understood the Queen of England wished them to induce his departure, he would go of his own accord. Accordingly he quitted Ghent for Germany, and thence went to England, forgetting the wild soldiery he had left behind in the Netherlands, who actually applied to Parma to pay them

their wages. Parma laughed heartily, but said he would allow them to leave the Netherlands, giving them notice that, unless they departed instantly, he would set upon them without delay. Thus deserted by their general, they accepted Parma's offer, and though unpaid left the country. Alençon now most hypocritically offered to intercede with Philip for the Provinces and, in order not to make him their enemy (for at this time it seemed probable that Elizabeth would marry him), the States answered his shallow words with urbanity, and flattered him with promises that his statue should be placed in the public squares of Antwerp and of Brussels 'for the eternal admiration of posterity.'

La Motte's Treason.—No man ever understood the art of bribery so well as Parma. He was one who got the most he could, and always gave the least price for the services he purchased; nevertheless he dealt in public with the ignoble men whom he bribed as though they were actuated by lofty principles. Before Parma's accession to power the true way to disserve the Provinces had been pointed out by La Motte. This nobleman had commanded a regiment for the States-General, and was Governor of Gravelines. On promise of forgiveness, pay, and continuance in his military posts, he went over to the Royalists. This treason was afterwards followed by many others. Whilst negotiations were going on with La Motte, the States of Artois, then assembled at Arras, were summoned to pay an assessment of 7000 florins. Sainte Aldegonde urged before the Assembly that Catholic and Protestant were equally bound to contribute to the sacred fund to support the war for liberty and fatherland.

But the occasion was artfully used by the agents of the Royal party to weaken the allegiance of the province to the States. When the vote passed providing that half the

money should be contributed by the Catholic clergy, there was an uproar. In particular, the Prior of Saint Vaast inflamed them against Orange. "They ought to keep their money to defend themselves," he said, "not give it to the Prince, who, as Ruward, would put it into his own pocket." This same Prior went about swiftly and noiselessly, bribing captains and common soldiers, and soon both Governor-General and King looked to him as their chief agent by whom the re-establishment of the royal power over the Walloon provinces might be effected.

More than once had the Prior urged 'that to despatch Orange, author of all the troubles,' was the surest way to put an end to the rebellion. A regular intrigue was now established in the Walloon country, La Motte being provided with large sums for bribing. In this way Lalain, Governor of Hainault, was gained over to Alençon's side to that of Philip, nor could the States rely on the fidelity of any of the nobles who commanded troops for them. The nobles and Romish ecclesiastics were ready to join hands for Philip throughout the Walloon country, but in Arras there was a strong party for Orange, who surprised and imprisoned the city magistrates and made a stand for the Prince, these however were soon overpowered and the leaders executed.

This was the last blow struck for freedom in the Walloon provinces. The influence of the ecclesiastics in Artois and Hainault, added to the military power of the malcontent grandees, (who had been bought over to Parma's side), could not be resisted; and some traitors of high rank actually consented to receive a price for the liberty of these provinces. Before the end of the year 1578, Montigny went over to Parma. Others followed, among whom was the Viscount of Ghent, who reconciled himself to the royal party on condition of retaining the post he then held,

besides receiving rewards and the title of Marquis de Richebourg, with the command of all the cavalry in the Royalist provinces. His brother, the Prince of Espinoy, hereditary seneschal of Hainault, likewise deserted the patriot cause, and the Prior of the richest abbey in the Netherlands, (Saint Vaast), was afterwards created Bishop of Cambray. Thus the 'troubles' of Arras ended most sadly. The Walloon provinces of Artois, Hainault, Lille, Douay, and Orchies made a separate league together, signed the 6th of January, 1579, and the final arrangements were completed the following April. The States-General had tried to recall Montigny and the Walloon provinces to a sense of their real position and interests, Montigny listened for a moment, and then left honour behind. Thus treachery and religious fanaticism had undermined the bulwarks for peace so lately reared.

The Prince again interposes to save the land. The Treaty of Utrecht.—But as in a beleaguered city breastworks are thrown up within, so the Prince in this extremity had silently worked to secure what should save so much of the land as would be saved, by means of the Treaty of Utrecht. Gelderland was the natural bulwark to Holland and Zeland, commanding as it did the four great rivers of the country, and being under the trusty governorship of Count John of Nassau. He and the Prince had promoted an active correspondence between influential persons in Gelderland, Friesland, and Groningen, and the more central cities and provinces, and in December, 1578, had laid before the states of Holland and Zeland, the project of a new union with Gelderland, Ghent, Friesland, Utrecht, Overysse, and Groningen. This treaty was published, the 29th January, 1579, from the Town House of Utrecht, and is for ever memorable as the foundation of the Netherland republic.

The contracting provinces agreed to remain eternally united as if they were but one province, while each should retain its particular privileges, customs, and laws. Disputes concerning these were to be decided by the usual tribunals, or else by 'good men,' or by friendly compromise. The United Provinces were to defend each other 'with life, goods, and blood,' should any force be brought against them by the King, and they were also to defend each other against all foreign and domestic foes.

If neighbouring provinces or cities wished to enter this union they were to be received into it if the whole of the confederated provinces unanimously consented. Every individual was to remain free in his religious observances, and no man was to be questioned or molested on the subject of divine worship. On the day these articles were signed, deputies from only five provinces were present. Count John of Nassau signed first as stadtholder of Gelderland and Zutphen, and the Envoys of Holland, Zeland, Utrecht, and the Frisian provinces followed. The Prince, the originator of the instrument which became the foundation of the great Commonwealth of the United Netherlands, appended his name, May the 3rd, 1579. This simple act of Union, however, was then formed for a single motive, namely, defence against a common oppressor. If the jealousy of the Catholic nobles and religious bigotry could have been restrained by Orange, all the seventeen provinces might have been united and years of bloodshed have been saved.

CHAPTER XXV.

PARMA INVESTS MAESTRICHT. THE WALLOON PROVINCES RECONCILE THEMSELVES TO PHILIP IN SPITE OF THE PRINCE'S EFFORTS.

ALEXANDER of Parma, intending in reality to surprise and recapture the city of Maestricht, made a feint upon Antwerp, the night of the 2nd of March, 1579. The Prince of Orange was then in Antwerp, and remained on the fortifications superintending the defence, when after an hour or two of sharp fighting, Parma retired with a loss of 400 men. However, his real design, as has been said, was on Maestricht, a well-fortified city, built on each side of the Meuse, and surrounded by a deep and broad moat. The garrison was but small, hardly numbering a thousand men, while the trained burghers amounted to 12,000, and there were besides three or four thousand peasants who had taken refuge within its walls.

Parma, on his side, had as many as 20,000 troops, with which he invested the city. Vainly had Orange warned the Estates of the danger likely to threaten Maestricht, imploring them 'not to fall asleep in the shade of a peace negotiation.' Many solemn embassies and appeals had been also made by Orange, in conjunction with the States-General, to the Walloon provinces, but every effort had been made in vain. Parma, at this time, publicly invited the States-General, by letter, to maintain the Ghent treaty, and to restore the system of the Emperor Charles "of

very lofty memory." To this the States-General replied, that it had been the Emperor's system to maintain his supremacy and that of Catholicism by burning Netherlanders; a system which the States, by common consent, determined to do away with.

Soon after an accord was signed between the Walloon Provinces and the King's government, and as there was no difficulty on the question of religion, it was settled that a member of the King's own family should always be Governor-General; that the foreign troops should be immediately withdrawn; and that the privileges of the Provinces should be respected.

The news that the Walloons had reconciled themselves to Philip spread quickly, dismaying the patriots, whilst the Catholics exulted and called Orange 'The Prince of Darkness.' The noble Prince made one last effort of despair to prevent this separation of his beloved country, and offered all his children as hostages in pledge of his good faith to keep sacredly any covenant which his Catholic fellow countrymen might make with him. But even this costly proffer was in vain; the decisive step had been taken, and the enemies of civil and religious liberty triumphed. Naturally the Reformers felt bitter against those of the opposite faith who had just made a bond with their common tyrant, and both in Antwerp and Utrecht there was a religious tumult caused by the celebration of the Ommegang, or festival of the Virgin; but these disturbances were disgraceful rather than dangerous, and were sternly repressed by Orange.

The young Count Egmont, at this time, after a foolish attempt to seize Brussels, reconciled himself to his father's murderer. Meanwhile, the siege of Maastricht continued.

Siege of Maastricht.—This city was the gate into Germany. A brave officer, named Sebastian Tappin, was the

principal director of the defence, though he was not the Military Commandant. Feeling that the siege would be a close one, he lost no time in making every necessary preparation. The walls were strengthened, shafts sunk for countermining; the moat cleared and deepened, the forts near the gates put into thorough repair. (There were six gates to the town). Parma had thrown two bridges across the river and fortified them, and had completely encircled the city.

And now, whilst feigning to make an attempt in another direction, he moved towards the Tongres gate, and set 4,000 miners to open a way underground. The besieged were also at work underground to countermine their enemies' attempts; even the women enrolled themselves into a company of 'mine-mistresses' and did good work day by day under the earth. The contending forces met every day in deadly combat beneath the ground. All sorts of schemes were resorted to on both sides. At one time hundreds of Spaniards were scalded to death by the besieged, who secretly constructed a dam across the mine made by their foes, and then flooded them with hogsheads of boiling water.

The besiegers suffocated many by lighting fires in the mine and filling the thick smoke along the subterranean passages with large organ-bellows brought on purpose from the Indies. The Spaniards then abandoned this mine and opened another shaft, still making for the Tongres gate. In their underground chamber they heaped up gunpowder and, setting fire to it, blew up part of the mine, choked the moat with rubbish, remaining in the ruins of the fort. The besiegers, driven back from the gate, after

the 3rd of April, and a general attack
days later. As a constant cannonade

had been kept up for a whole fortnight against another gate, (Bois-le-Duc), and as another mine had been made towards the Tongres gate, both these places were to be specially attacked at once. At the Bois-le-Duc gate the fighting was very fierce, the women aiding the defenders in the thickest part of the fray. More than a thousand of the Spaniards fell, while fresh assailants constantly mounted the breach and were as constantly driven back. Nor had the assault been more successful at the Tongres gate. As the Spaniards advanced against it with renewed fury, a new mine, secretly countermined by the besieged, exploded, and five hundred royalists were blown into the air, whilst none of the defenders were injured.

The battle still raged, though 4,000 of the besiegers lay dead, and at length the bravest of the surviving officers besought Parma to put an end to the carnage by recalling the troops; which he was at last compelled to do. For the future he determined to rely more on the sappers and miners and to spend the whole summer if necessary beneath the walls. For this purpose he surrounded Maestricht with a chain of forts connected by a wall, within which were houses for his soldiers,—virtually a second city enclosing the first, so that no relief whatever could be sent to the besieged, nor could Parma himself be attacked; thus defended he could continue the siege at leisure. Orange with difficulty collected 7,000 men to relieve Maestricht: but he found it impossible to advance. He therefore attempted to open negotiations for a truce, but failed.

Parma now attacked the Brussels gate, that farthest from the river and facing towards the open country westwards. He erected an elevated platform of immense strength, and after a severe cannonade took an inner ravelin which the besieged had built. The defenders saw

the tower shattered before they abandoned it ; at least one thousand of them fell, and they now retired behind their last defences.

The garrison was by this time reduced to four hundred men, nearly all wounded, who, in despair, would have made terms with the enemy, but the townspeople protested they would destroy the soldiers if they attempted it. The women and children kept up hope of relief, so did Sebastian Tappin, the brave second in command. The besieged had built a strong fortification inside the Brussels gate, and within this a breastwork of turf and masonry to serve as a last defence. The whole was surrounded by a fosse, thirty feet deep. It was against this last fortress that Parma directed his efforts. He had a bridge made across the city moat, he himself calmly driving in the first of the piles for the bridge, while his men fell dead round him struck by the guns of the enemy. Still no one dared recoil whilst the Governor-General worked among the bullets like a common pioneer.

Parma never left the spot till the bridge had been constructed and ten great guns carried across it and pointed against the last defence. Then the battery was opened, the mines sprung, and a part of the fortress blown up. A furious conflict ensued, and after an obstinate resistance the brave towns-people were forced to yield. They slowly abandoned the fort and retired behind the breastwork, their last shield, which, being still strong, was not attempted that day. Refusing to surrender they strengthened this sole shelter left to them, and as Alexander was ill of fever, and as a mysterious letter had arrived encouraging them to hold out fourteen days longer, a brief period of hope succeeded. But Parma reproached his soldiers for allowing a barrier hurriedly thrown up by a few burghers, to stop their progress and hinder their success, and orders were given for the renewed attack next day.

That night, a Spanish soldier going his rounds, listening to hear if he could catch anything said by the besieged, discovered a chink in the wall, enlarged the gap, and crept through. The sentinels, the soldiers, the towns-people,—men, women, and children, all slept, exhausted by fatigue. The soldier crept back to inform his superiors, and Parma ordered an immediate attack. Whilst the city was still in deep repose the wall was stormed, and in a moment the merciless foe swarmed in. Escape was impossible. A cruel slaughter succeeded, and the wail of agony which arose was heard at a league's distance. Mothers took their infants and threw them into the Meuse, and then plunged in themselves, for the fury of the Spaniards was directed chiefly against the women because they had shared in the defence. They were hunted from house to house, hurled from roofs and windows,—torn limb from limb !

Unimaginable cruelties were again committed in the streets of Maestricht. Four thousand men and women were murdered the first day, and the massacre continued two days longer. The brave Sebastian Tappin, shot through the shoulder, had expired. After all it was nothing very glorious in war for Parma to carry an ill-garrisoned town in so long a time, and with every aid besides that of superior numbers, while it must be remembered that the besieged Maestrichters had fought like heroes.

The Prince falsely blamed.—The Prince of Orange was blamed as usual for the sad end to the siege of Maestricht. Yet he had done all that man could do to awaken his countrymen to the importance of the siege, imploring the States-General, almost on his knees, to take efficient measures to avert what had now happened ; but his warm appeals had been met by lukewarmness and by wrangling addresses. He was now accused of plotting to deliver his country into the power of France, and he alone, said some, prevented an honourable peace with Spain !

While the States-Assembly was sitting, a letter was brought by an unknown messenger and taken to the Clerk's table to be read aloud as was customary. The reader hesitated, for the letter was a violent libel on the Prince, who alone, of all the Assembly, preserved his calmness, and repeated that he was ready at that moment to leave the country for ever if by doing so he could restore peace to the land. The outcry which arose, and the expressions of attachment which broke from the Assembly, convinced him that it was beyond the power of slanderers to loosen his hold on the confidence of all patriotic Netherlanders.

The Prince's continued efforts for the public good.— Meantime matters went from bad to worse in the city of Ghent, where Imbize fermented misrule, and accused the Prince of being a man who knew no good but State expediency, of being a Papist in disguise, of wishing to restore Roman idolatry. Ryhove, too, rather damaged than promoted the cause of order whilst opposing Imbize.

Again and again were the Catholics maltreated, and plundered of their property. Orange hastened to restrain these doings, allowing that there was reason for feeling provoked by the tyranny of the Walloon soldiers, but expressing his surprise that reasonable men should seek their remedy by such a course as that pursued. "It was as if a patient tore the bandages from his wounds, instead of allowing himself to be cured," argued he.

The Prince was then entreated to go to Ghent, and he, thus besought, consented, and wrote that he would come, adding, "They who so boldly accuse me have no liberty of speech save that acquired for them by the blood of my kindred, by my labours, and excessive expenditures. To me they owe it that they dare speak at all." Imbize then made great efforts to prevent the Prince going to Ghent ;

but the Prince was firm and went thither, and his presence was most beneficial. He remained there till the regular election of magistrates and other functionaries had taken place, and having rebuked the people in warmly indignant language, and restored order when others were powerless to do so, he returned to Antwerp, allowing Imbize to slink away unpunished.

CHAPTER XXVI.

THE COLOGNE CONFERENCE.—THE SPANISH PARTY SEEK IN VAIN TO GAIN OVER THE PRINCE.

FOR some time past a host of dignitaries, Envoys from Germany, Rome, Spain, and from the States-General of the Netherlands, had been negotiating at Cologne concerning a pacification of the Netherlands. But these negotiations were hopeless of result, and were undertaken in great measure to deceive the people with the hope of some beneficial issue. The Royalist party had no desire to make any real concession, though weary of war; but they thought to separate the Provinces.

Their first step had been a secret but indirect attempt to induce the Prince to leave his party. Don John of Austria had tried this, as we have seen, and though Philip's party knew that "neither for property nor life, neither for wife nor children, would he mix in his cup a single drop of treason," yet they gave him to understand distinctly that "there was nothing he could demand for himself that would not be granted." All his property, the restoration of his son, liberty of worship for himself, payment of all his debts, reimbursement for all past expenses, and anything else he could desire would be assured him. If he chose to retire to another land, his son should be placed in possession of all his cities, estates, and dignities, and himself indemnified in Germany with a million of money over and above all this. But the

Prince had reached too great a height for these temptations to move him. How can honour itself be tempted by dishonour?

So entirely did the Prince work for his country without a thought of self, that he said to the States-General that if to deprive the enemy of every right to inculcate them they thought proper to choose another head, "I promise you to serve and be obedient to him with all my heart. Thus shall we leave the enemy no standing place to work dissensions among us." Here was a man whom kings were not rich enough to purchase!

The negotiations at Cologne were not likely to issue in any permanent result, as the States' Envoys expressed astonishment "that mention should again be made of the Edicts—as if blood enough had not already been shed in the cause of religion." And they gave the Imperial Commissioners to understand that in case peace were not made, "the States would forthwith declare the King fallen from his sovereignty," and probably accept Anjou in his place. After a fruitless conference of seven months the Envoys returned home, remarking that, "had they known their Transparencies and Worthinesses had no better intention, the whole matter might have been despatched, not in six months, but in six days." Thus the Cologne Conference ended where it began, for Philip still demanded absolute supremacy for himself and for the Romish religion.

The Prince shows that want of union is the cause of the Nation's troubles. Other treasons. Loss of the city of Groningen.—At the end of November, 1579, the Prince made another address to the States-General at Antwerp, showing with his customary grace and energy, the cause of all their troubles; namely, the absence of a broad love of country, and their jealous reluctance to give a due amount of freedom to their deputies who were thus power-

less to act as councillors of a commonwealth. He alluded to the countless calumnies against himself, appealing to all the actions of his life as a refutation of them ; he demanded inquiry into the purity of his government, chastisement if any act of his deserved it, and repeated his wish to be relieved of his offices, or to be furnished with means to fill them efficiently.

Again, both in December and the following January, 1580, he addressed them, urging the necessity of raising a considerable army of experienced soldiers ; and he complained that for want of means he was prevented alleviating misery when the remedy was within reach.

Early in this year, the Prince suffered a bitter sorrow in the treachery of his friend, Count Renneberg, governor of Friesland, who went over to Philip's side. The governor of Mechlin and other influential men had previously done the same. Count Renneberg's treason was particularly shameful, and by it the city of Groningen was formally re-united to the Royal Government, but the province of Groningen was happily not won over, and Renneberg himself was instantly beleaguered by the forces of the States. The Prince, full of sadness at this news, now went to Amsterdam, where he was received with unbounded joy.

De la Noue a prisoner.—The struggle continued in various parts of the country, and in a fight near Ingelmunster, the States and the Prince experienced a great loss in the capture of Count de la Noue by Philip's troops. This brave and accomplished nobleman, who had done great service to the Netherlands, remained five years a prisoner in the donjon keep of the castle of Limburg, exposed to rain and cold from an aperture in the roof, while rats, toads, and other vermin infested the dirty floor. Great efforts were made by his friends for his release, and Philip made the hideous proposal to set him at liberty if

he would consent to have his eyes put out. Happily he refused, and in June, 1585, he was exchanged on rigorous terms for Egmont. In his loathsome dungeon De la Noue wrote several works, since famous.

Siege of Groningen.—It devolved on Count Philip Hohenlo, a noble of high rank, nearly connected with the Nassau family, (but a drunkard and only distinguished for personal bravery), to conduct the siege of Groningen. It had been said of him, that "he was fitter to drive swine than to govern honourable men." After-events justified the saying. Parma had sent a large force under Martin Schenck to relieve Groningen, and Hohenlo, hearing of his arrival at Coewerden, marched all night and part of a day to meet him. Hohenlo's men, weary and fainting with thirst, were soon annihilated, and once more 'the fate of all the north-east provinces was swinging in the wind.'

Count John of Nassau leaves the Netherlands.—The country people, torn with misery, rose in arms, pillaging and burning, calling themselves "the Desperates." Hohenlo defeated them twice, and an insignificant war with Renneberg succeeded. This summer, the Prince, who was now almost alone, was doomed to suffer further by the final departure of his brother, Count John of Nassau, from the Netherlands. Let those disposed to blame the Count first realise the life he had led there. His lodgings were a half-roofed barrack, where he passed his days in a small, dark, frozen room, often without fire. "The baker has given notice that he will supply no more wood after to-morrow unless paid." "The cook has often no meat to roast, so that we often go supperless to bed."

This was the way the States of Gelderland treated their Stadtholder, who was growing "gray and grizzled for their sakes," who had "been fed with annoyance as if he had eaten it with a spoon" (to use his own words); who had

spent 600,000 florins in their service. The affairs of his own Countship were in great confusion, and he had many children who needed his guidance. He left behind him in the Netherlands a worthy representative, his eldest son, William Louis, already in arms for the patriot cause, already distinguished for his rash valour when wounded severely at Cœwerden. We can excuse the long-suffering Count John for leaving Gelderland; as for the Prince, he entreated him to remain, esteeming that enough had not been done while anything remained to do. "One must do one's best," wrote the Prince. "If we do our best, God will assuredly help us. Had we thought otherwise, we should never have pierced the dykes on a memorable occasion, for it was an uncertain thing, and a great sorrow for the poor people, yet God did bless the undertaking. He will bless us still, for His arm has not been shortened."

The Treaty of Plessis-les-Tours.—Towards the beginning of autumn, the States-General sent a special legation to France, to treat with the Duke of Anjou, and terms of agreement with him were concluded by the Treaty of Plessis-les-Tours, the 29th of September, 1580. But Holland and Zeland kept apart from this transaction. From first to last they desired no sovereign but Orange, and now formally offered him the Sovereignty over their provinces. But this offer the Prince refused.

The Ban.—In the course of the year 1579, Philip became King of Portugal, and from the time that all opposition to him was put down in that country, he had still more leisure to vent his wrath against the Netherlands and Orange. Cardinal Granvelle had always counselled Philip to poison the Prince, and this prelate now advised the king to set a price on his head, publicly. "It will be well," wrote Philip to Parma, "to offer 30,000 crowns or so to any one who will deliver him dead or alive."

Accordingly the famous Ban was drawn up by Philip and Granvelle, and published in the Netherlands, June 1580, a document which will ever remain a lasting monument to the infamy of both. It accused the Prince of many crimes; of rebellion, of introducing liberty of conscience, of a new conspiracy called the Utrecht Union, of procuring his own appointment as Ruward, of violating the Ghent Treaty, etc. "For these causes we declare him traitor . . . banish him perpetually from our realms, forbidding all our subjects to communicate with him, to administer victuals, fire, drink, or other necessities. We allow all to injure him in life or property . . . And if any of our subjects, or any stranger, shall be found sufficiently *generous of heart* to rid us of this pest, delivering him to us dead or alive . . . we will cause him to be furnished with 25,000 crowns in gold. *If he have committed any crime, however heinous, we promise to pardon him, and if he be not already noble, we will ennoble him for his valour.*"

The Apology of the Prince.—Orange answered this Ban by the defiance of his "Apology," one of the most impressive documents in history, which was sent to most of the crowned heads in Europe. In this the Prince rejected the idea of any *King* over the Netherlands; the Provinces recognised no such title. Philip, he said, was only Duke or Count, and whatever his claims, he had forfeited them by violation of his oaths, not once but many times. All ties of allegiance had been broken by him, and, as for kingly descent, the Nassaus had occupied illustrious positions, and had ruled as sovereigns in the Netherlands when Philip's family, the Hapsburgs, were only obscure squires in Switzerland. Then he exposed Philip's crimes one after the other, telling him to his face "Thus diddest thou."

Orange scorned the fact that a price was set on his head, and asked if Philip supposed him ignorant of the various

bargains with cut-throats and poisoners to take away his life. Then, appealing to the States, "Would to God that my perpetual banishment, or even my death, could bring you a true deliverance! Oh, how consoling would be such a banishment! how sweet such a death! For why have I exposed my property? Why have I lost my brothers? Was it that I might find new ones? Why have I left my son so long a prisoner? Can you give me another? Why have I put my life so often in danger? . . . If then you judge that my absence or death can serve you, behold me ready to obey. Here is my head, over which no prince has power but yourselves. Dispose of it for your good, . . . but if you judge that the remainder of my property and life can yet be of service to you, I dedicate them afresh to you and to the country." His motto, "*Je maintiendrai*," was appended, and was the concluding phrase of this noble remonstrance and defence, which was cordially approved by the States.

During the remainder of the year, and the first half of 1581, Parma was inactive for want of troops. Renneberg laid siege to Steenwyk, a small town, but the key to Drenthe. The inhabitants held out with great bravery, and at last Renneberg, the traitor, abandoned the siege in despair, and he died not long after, partly of shame and grief, July, 1581.

Philip now committed the absurd mistake of sending back the Duchess Margaret to divide the Regency of the Netherlands with her son, Parma. The latter was furious, and offered to resign, insisting on all authority or none; and finally Margaret entreated permission to withdraw almost immediately.

Declaration of Independence.—A most important step was now taken by the Provinces after their long hesitation, the 26th July, 1581, on which day the United Provinces

assembled at the Hague, solemnly declared their independence, and renounced their allegiance to Philip for ever.

This declaration left the country in a divided state. It was now separated into three portions,—the reconciled Walloon provinces under Philip ; the Northern provinces (Holland and Zeland) under Orange as Count of Holland and Zeland, with full sovereignty, as they would accept no other ruler ; and the remaining provinces under Anjou.

The acceptance of sovereignty by Orange gave him no fresh power, but a formal continuance of that which he already exercised ; and he, being constantly entreated and seeing that the States refused any other master, consented to exercise this power *as long as the war should continue*. Secretly and *without the knowledge of Orange*, the States, determined that he alone should rule them, cancelled the words which limited the term of his sovereignty. The Act of Independence was called *The Act of Abjuration*. At the outset of this document the States laid down some startling and wholesome truths. "All men know that a prince is appointed by God to cherish his subjects even as a shepherd to guard his sheep. When therefore he oppresses them, destroys their ancient liberties, . . . he is to be considered not as a prince but tyrant. As such . . . the States may lawfully elect another in his room." The States then ran through the history of the past twenty-five years, and told the world their wrongs, without passion or exaggeration.

After this great step what was the condition of the people? The sovereignty of certain united provinces had been offered to Anjou, but the terms of agreement were not yet ratified. Without a positive intention on the part of the people to establish a Republic, the Republic established itself. Whilst the unfortunate negotiations with Anjou went on, the sovereignty of the United Provinces was pro-

visionally held by the State Council and by the Prince. The people worshipped him, and daily, without intermission, implored him to take the rule instead of Anjou.

The Archduke leaves the Provinces.—The Archduke Mathias, whose duties were at an end, took his leave of the country in October, and the States voted him a pension of 50,000 guildens. It was unfortunate that Orange still believed it best for the States to be united under the rule of a foreign sovereign, and that the connection with France would be of more benefit to the country than its being under his own sole rule. There was a feeling in many minds that the French King would assist the Netherlands heartily, if his brother were once formally installed as sovereign over them. Indeed, he had written so distinctly, and it was thought by the Prince's party that Anjou's power could be so limited as to exist only in name. "The Duke is not to act according to his pleasure, we shall take care to provide a good muzzle for him," wrote Count John of Nassau. And at midsummer the Duke journeyed to the Netherlands, but as he was still full of hopes that he should persuade Elizabeth to marry him, he soon left for England; and the Duke of Parma, relieved of his presence, forthwith besieged Tournay.

Capitulation of Tournay.—This city was commanded by the Princess d'Espinoy in the absence of her husband with the army in the North. The siege lasted two months, the Princess appearing daily among the troops superintending the defences, and personally directing the officers. When the city was greatly undermined, and the Papist part of the population on the point of revolt, the Princess made an honourable capitulation to Parma, and was allowed to retire with all her garrison, with all the honours of war.

The sack of the city was saved by a payment of 100,000 crowns, and the Princess, on leaving the gates, was received

with a shout of applause from the enemy, thus retiring more like a conqueror than a defeated commander.

Reception of Anjou in the Netherlands.—More than ever dissatisfied with the condition of affairs, the Prince of Orange again summoned the country in the most earnest language to provide for the general defence, and the formal reception of Anjou. He painted in forcible colours the prospect which lay before them if nothing were done to stop the internal disorders and the advance of their common foe, showing that had the Provinces taken his advice they would have saved their beautiful city of Tournay.

The States, thus roused, sent a special mission to Anjou, in England, to arrange for his installation as sovereign of the Netherlands. Elizabeth had exchanged rings with Anjou, and their marriage was supposed to be near, and great was the joy felt in the Netherlands at the prospect of such an alliance with England. By the end of January, 1582, the Duke arrived in the Netherlands, where the ceremony of his joyful entrance as Duke of Brabant and Sovereign of the Provinces, was to take place. He landed at Flushing, where Orange and a large deputation from the States-General had waited several days to receive him.

Anjou was now twenty-eight years of age, small, short, ill-shaped, his face covered with blotches and marks of small-pox, nor had he any grace or dignity. In particular his nose was so large that it seemed to be a double one, and his enemies were wont to observe that it was no wonder, as the man who always wore two faces might be expected to have two noses.

No one so dangerous and despicable had as yet received any power in the Netherlands. His arrival was greeted with the ringing of bells and firing of cannon, a stately banquet, and other ceremonies. On the 17th of Febru-

ary he set sail for Antwerp, but landed at Kiel, a bowshot from the city, for, like other Dukes of Brabant, he was not to enter Antwerp till he had taken the oaths to respect the Constitution.

It was a bright winter morning. Twenty thousand burgher troops in magnificent uniform (which magnificence astonished the French) stood round the platform, the floor of which was covered with tapestry, and on which were assembled the great functionaries of Antwerp. Here, on a throne covered with velvet and gold, sat the Duke; and before him Orator Hessels read aloud the articles of the Joyous Entry. Anjou signified that he had thoroughly studied them, and the oaths were then administered. Afterwards he was invested with the ducal hat, and velvet mantle lined with ermine, the Prince of Orange saying, as he helped the Duke to fasten the button of the cloak, "I must secure this robe so firmly, my Lord, that no man may ever tear it from your shoulders."

When also, further oaths had been exchanged with the magistrates, a stately procession accompanied the Duke into the city. Many distinguished Englishmen took a part in this ceremony, and amongst the crowd of notables rode Count Maurice of Nassau, a handsome dark-eyed lad of fifteen, the son of William the Silent, destined to be one of the first Captains of the age.

Thus had another master, the most treacherous of any, been received by the Netherlanders that day.

Attempted Assassination of the Prince.—Sunday, the 18th of March, 1582, was the Duke of Anjou's birthday, and a great festival was to be held in the evening, the Prince of Orange being, of course, invited. The Prince dined as usual in his own house, in company with four guests, his son, Count Maurice, and two of his nephews, sons of his brother John. During dinner the conversation was ani-

mated, and many stories were told of the cruelties committed by the Spaniards. On rising from table, the Prince led the way to his own apartments, showing the noblemen with him, as he passed along, some tapestry representing Spanish soldiers. As he stood on the threshold of his antechamber, a vulgar-looking youth of pale, dark complexion, appeared and offered a petition. As the Prince took the paper the stranger fired at him with a pistol; the ball entered his neck under the right ear, and came out under the left jaw-bone, carrying away two teeth. The Prince, blinded for the moment and stunned, remained standing. He thought that a part of the house must have fallen, but finding that his hair was burning, he then understood what had occurred, and exclaimed, "Do not kill him. I forgive him my death!" He believed he had been mortally wounded, and yet made this noble effort to save his murderer. But two of the gentlemen present had already thrust their rapiers into the assassin.

The Prince was supported to his chamber, where the surgeons pronounced his wound most dangerous, and but for a strange circumstance the flow of blood might have proved fatal before the wound could be dressed. The flame from the pistol had cauterised the wound made by the ball! The Prince, who believed himself dying, was full of sympathy for Anjou, who by his death would so soon be left alone in the midst of his new and difficult duties. As the surgeons implored the Prince not to speak, he wrote incessantly. As long as his heart beat, it was impossible for him not to be occupied for his country. Lion Petit, a captain of the City Guard, forced his way into the Prince's room, to report (from the evidence of his own eyesight) the Prince's condition to the people, among whom had spread a report of his death, and that Anjou had compassed it. The Prince

wrote that Captain Petit must assure them he was still alive, and implore them in case of his death to hold him in kind remembrance, to make no tumult, and to serve the Duke faithfully.

Count Maurice of Nassau.—At this trying time young Maurice of Nassau showed the stuff of which he was made. Despite his grief he remained steadily by the murderer's body in order, if possible, to unravel the plot and possess himself of all papers found on him; these, on a rapid examination, were discovered to be all in Spanish, written by Spaniards to Spaniards. A faithful servant who had remained by Count Maurice advised the young Count to go to the Prince, whilst he himself spread the news of this important discovery.

The Murderers.—In the pockets of the assassin were found an *Agnus Dei*, a green wax taper, two bits of hare-skin, two dried toads, a crucifix, a Jesuit Catechism, a Prayer Book, a pocket book, some Spanish bills of exchange, and a set of writing tablets. The latter were covered with prayers bribing the Saints and Virgin to help him. He had been duped into believing that he would rid the world of a tyrant, and would himself become invisible after accomplishing the deed!

The body of the murderer was exposed in the public Square, and was soon recognised as that of one Juan Jaureguy, a servant in the employ of Gaspar Anastro, a Spanish merchant of Antwerp. The house of the latter was immediately searched, and it was found that the merchant had pretended he had pressing business at Calais, and had left home. His cashier, Venero, and a friar named Zimmermann, were arrested on suspicion. Next day the Watch at the city gates carried the foreign post bags to the magistrates, who found a letter from Anastro, the merchant, to his cashier, which unravelled the whole dark business,

After this discovery Venero made a full confession. The merchant, being a bankrupt, had made a contract with Philip to murder Orange within a fixed time, and he was to receive as a reward 80,000 ducats and the cross of Santiago, one of Spain's proudest Orders. Anastro, not wishing to risk his own life, conferred with his cashier, and they arranged the job with Jaureguy.

The Prince's State. His clemency. Death of the Princess of Orange.—The Prince all this time lay in the most critical condition. Believing his end approaching, he wrote to the States-General entreating them to continue their obedience to Anjou. A solemn fast was held in Antwerp on the Wednesday, all work and amusements being prohibited and special prayers for the Prince's recovery commanded. Never had such crowds been seen in all the churches, nor so many tears shed. The Prince from his sick-bed entreated that the trial of Venero and Zimmermann should be in strict accordance with justice, and when their execution could no longer be deferred, to him alone his murderers owed it, that they were put to death in the least painful manner. If it had not been for the Prince's interference they would have been subjected to lingering tortures; but, owing to his intercession, they were spared this, and were strangled the 28th of March, on a scaffold erected in the market-place.

As time went on the Prince was thought to be recovering; his wife hardly left him, and his sister, the Countess of Schwartzburg, was constant in her attentions to him. But on the 5th of April the gravest fears took the place of hope. On that day the bleeding recommenced, and it seemed impossible to check it. The Prince resigned himself to death and bade his children "good night for ever," saying calmly, "It is now all over with me." It was difficult to staunch the wound without suffocating the

Prince, but one of Anjou's physicians named Botalli, thought of a simple method, that of keeping the thumb constantly pressed on the orifice of the wound. By this means it healed, and at the end of the month the Prince was convalescent. On the 2d of May he went to offer thanksgiving in the great Cathedral amid the joyful sobs of a vast throng of people.

The Prince was saved, but the Princess of Orange, who for seven years had most devotedly shared his joys and sorrows, had been attacked by a violent fever owing to her long anxiety and despair at the renewed hæmorrhage, and she died May the 5th, three days after the public thanksgiving. The Prince, who tenderly loved her, was in danger of a relapse owing to this great grief, and the whole country lamented the loss of the Princess, for her virtues and rare qualities were universally known. A few years before this, in 1580, Count John had written that his brother "was in excellent health in spite of adversity and dangers, and in such good spirits it made him happy to witness it; a chief reason for which was the consolation he derived from the pious intelligent wife the Lord had given him—a woman inexpressibly dear to the Prince, who ever conformed to his wishes." The Princess left six daughters; Louisa Juliana, Elizabeth, Catherine Belgica, Flandrina, Charlotta Brabantica, and Emilia Secunda.

The real instigator of the attempted murder, Anastro, escaped to the Duke of Parma.

Foundation of a free Commonwealth securely laid.—In consequence of the popular excitement caused by the Prince's danger, he could no longer decline accepting without limitation, the Countship of Holland and Zeland. It became necessary to formulate a new Constitution, and

the basis of this was the 'Great Privilege,' or *Magna Charta* of Mary of Burgundy. The Prince derived his Sovereignty from the Estates, and the idea of any divine right was thus done away with, the foundation of a free Commonwealth being thus securely laid.

CHAPTER XXVII.

RE-INTRODUCTION OF FOREIGN TROOPS. ANECDOTE OF PARMA.

It will be remembered that the Walloon provinces had reconciled themselves to Philip, and that one provision of the treaty of peace was that the foreign soldiers should be permanently withdrawn. But now Parma declared that it was absolutely necessary for them to re-admit fresh regiments of Italian and Spanish troops because of the treaty which the United Provinces had made with Anjou. By midsummer these troops began to arrive in the Netherlands.

Meanwhile, the Duke of Parma had not been idle, but had taken many important cities, one of which was Oudenardè. In the siege of this place he himself often worked like a common soldier, and he took his meals near the outer defences that he might always be at hand to direct his officers; one day, when sitting with several of them at dinner, a ball came flying over the table and took off the head of a young officer seated near the Duke. A part of the splintered skull took out the eye of another officer, while a second ball destroyed two more of the guests. All started from their seats except the Duke, who quietly told the attendants to remove the dead bodies and bring a clean table cloth, and actually insisted that those present should resume their places at the banquet. This

anecdote is related to show the daring and callousness of the man.

Parma attempts to poison the Prince and Anjou. Treachery of Anjou.—During the year 1582, Anjou had been formally accepted as Duke of Gueldres and Lord of Friesland, and inaugurated at Bruges as Count of Flanders. He was also received with many honours at Ghent, where the ceremonies were interrupted by an attack on Anjou's troops from a body of Walloons under Parma himself. Anjou and the Prince of Orange personally superintended the defence from the city walls, and Parma was forced to retire with considerable loss. The month previous to this, an attempt had been made to poison both the Prince and Anjou; an Italian named Basa and a Spaniard named Salseda both confessed that the Prince of Parma had hired them to do the deed.

In the middle of December of this year, many nobles of high rank came from France to pay their court to the Duke of Anjou, and secretly expressed to him their disgust that he, their future King, should be so tied and hampered by the laws and charters of the Netherlands. They thought it far beneath his dignity to take a secondary part as Duke of Brabant, Count of Flanders, Lord of Friesland, etc., while the real power of government lay, not in his hands but in those of the Estates, and they whispered that he ought to take measures to join the Netherlands to France. They went on to awaken his jealousy of the Prince whom he already hated for his superior intellect and high character. Thus incited, Anjou secretly swore that he would assert his own rights, and would no longer possess the mere shadow of power.

From this moment he never rested in his plans to secure unlimited sway over the land whose charters he had so solemnly sworn to uphold. Early in January, 1583, he

unfolded his scheme to his confidential friends. He was determined to take possession of the principal cities of Flanders, and to invade on the same day, Dunkirk, Dixmuyde, Dendermonde, Bruges, Ghent, Vilvoorde, Alost, and Antwerp. His worthless friends applauded the idea, for they were all eager to share in the plunder of so many wealthy cities. The 15th of January was fixed on for the execution of the treacherous design. Not suspecting any danger, the towns of Dunkirk, Ostend, Dixmuyde, Dendermonde, and Alost, were easily secured on the day appointed, but the important town of Bruges saved itself, as some of the citizens got news of what had happened elsewhere, and the French troops had to retire from this place to avoid being torn to pieces by the citizens whom they had intended to surprise.

Next day, January the 16th, suspicion was aroused at Antwerp. During the night, a man in a mask came into the chief guard-house, and mysteriously gave warning that a great crime was about to be committed,—then disappeared before he could be arrested. The Colonels and Captains of the Burgher Guard came to consult the Prince about this strange communication. He answered that he had entire confidence in Anjou, nevertheless he recommended various precautions, such as were usually taken on the eve of an expected attack, and that the drawbridge should be raised an hour earlier than usual; and he sent the Burgomaster to the Duke to tell him of the apprehensions aroused.

The French Fury.—Anjou protested in the most solemn manner that these suspicions were groundless, that he “was ready to shed every drop of his blood in the defence of Antwerp.” He repeated all this and much more next morning, and solemnly promised not to leave the city during the whole day, when the Prince begged him to

remain in order to do away with every appearance for uneasiness.

Yet hardly had he made this promise when he broke it. He waited till one o'clock, an hour when every one was at dinner and the streets almost deserted, and then placing himself at the head of his body-guard and some troopers, he galloped off towards his camp. His troopers butchered every man on watch at the gate, and left a force to hold this entrance to the city, while others entered the town at full gallop, shrieking out—"Ville gagnée! Vive la messe! vive le Duc d' Anjou!" The burghers coming to their doors to see what was the matter were fired on, and at first thought this was only an accidental tumult: but soon all flew to arms. Noble and simple, Papist and Protestant, swore to die by each other's side in defence of the city.

One baker alone did such good service in helping to repel the attack that the magistrates publicly thanked him afterwards, and gave him a pension of 300 florins for life. Women and children lent very efficient aid; while the citizens loaded their pieces with the silver buttons on their coats, and with gold and silver coin when their bullets were used up. The 4,000 invaders were soon overwhelmed by the large number of resolute inhabitants, and in an hour, nearly 1,300 were slain, whilst very few of the citizens had perished. The French in vain attempted to retreat, and many threw themselves into the moat. At length, 250 nobles of high rank lay dead, and about 2,000 rank and file,—the rest were prisoners.

Anjou was bitterly reproached by his own followers for his disgraceful treachery, and conscience-stricken, mounted his horse and fled. The Prince did not know of the attack till the affair was nearly at an end, for his house was far from the scene of action, but when he received the

intelligence he hastened to the ramparts to persuade the citizens to cease cannonading their flying foe. This was called the *French Fury*, though it differed so widely from the terrible *Spanish Fury*.

Anjou retreated towards Dendermonde, and on his way thither, a dyke, cut by the citizens of Mechlin to impede his march, drowned at least a thousand of his followers.

Anjou's baseness. Negotiations with him.—Black as had been his treachery, Anjou now opened a correspondence with the Prince, and had the effrontery to attribute the recent occurrence to chance, and to speak of himself as an injured person! He also asked for supplies, and for his plate and furniture. In the same strain he wrote to the Estates. They did not reply in their own names immediately, but sent an answer through his Envoys, agreeing to restore the Duke's furniture and to liberate the prisoners, and they also sent a deputation to make further arrangements with him.

Anjou now assumed quite another tone, and spoke of being ready to forgive the States, but in future they must trust to his word: A tumult had accidentally taken place between his soldiers and the guard at the gate; other troops rushed in and joined in the fray, so that to his great sorrow this disaster had arisen. This was the substance of his letters to the States and of his language. At first he had not ventured to deny the truth; *now* he assumed this tone. High and harsh words ensued. The Prince, justly angry at such baseness and insolence, wrote to Anjou in plain terms, telling him that affairs were so changed that his greatness had departed. Men but yesterday ready to die at his feet now preferred an open enemy to so treacherous a protector. Yet the Prince knew it would be madness to provoke the government of France against the Netherlands, and thus gain an additional enemy.

The state of affairs was desperate, but he still hoped for some sort of accommodation. There was no end to the depth of Anjou's baseness. At this very time he offered to restore to Parma, Dunkirk, Dixmuyde and the other cities he had just seized, and to make a strict alliance with Philip, if certain Netherland cities on the French frontier were delivered up to him, and ample protection made for his retreat. Parma smiled at such exorbitant demands, but he too dealt cautiously with the man who might so soon be seated on the throne of France, and while they were disputing about terms, the Prince of Orange discovered the plot. But as it would have been madness to incur the hostility of France and Spain united, when pressed by the Estates to give his advice once more, the Prince, although knowing he should only be blamed as usual, warned them of this danger, alluded to their quarrels among themselves, to their reluctance in contributing sufficient for their own defence, and the danger of displeasing the English Queen by offending Anjou to desperation. Anjou must in some way be detached from an alliance with Spain, for the Netherlands could not deal with two such powerful nations as France and Spain united.

The result of this determination was a provisional arrangement with Anjou, signed towards the end of March, 1583. According to the terms then agreed on, the Duke was to surrender the cities he held, and to receive 30,000 florins for the pay of his troops. His property was to be restored, and he himself to go to Dunkirk, there to await a new and definitive arrangement. But in June of that year the Duke left Dunkirk for Paris, never to return to the Netherlands. On his departure he wrote affectionate letters to the Prince and to the Estates, and left a representative behind him to carry on negotiations for the restoration of that position which he had so basely forfeited.

Fourth Marriage of Orange. This year the Prince of Orange married Louisa, daughter of the illustrious Coligny, and widow of the Seigneur de Teligny.

Supreme Sovereignty once more pressed on the Prince.—The States of Holland and Zeland, always bitterly opposed to an alliance with Anjou, once more besought the Prince to accept the Sovereignty over the whole of the United Provinces, and soon afterwards, August, 1583, the Estates of the United Provinces, assembled at Middleburg, formally offered the general government, equivalent to the Sovereignty, to the Prince, warmly urging his acceptance of it. Still he was reluctant to acquiesce, reminding them that he was no powerful monarch having in his own hands the means to help them; and so, like every other attempt to induce the Prince to accept supreme Sovereignty, this likewise failed.

About the same time deputies from the Brabant Council waited upon Orange, and formally offered him the Sovereign Dukedom of Brabant vacant by the late crime of Anjou. But he resolutely refused the dignity, determined to do nothing which might lay his country open to an attack from France.

Parma retakes many towns. Treachery of Aerschot. Ghent nearly won over to the enemy.—Meantime the Prince of Parma had been busy retaking many towns laid open to his troops by Anjou's treason: Eindhoven, Diest, Dunkirk, Newport and Zutphen, with some others. A treacherous and deep-laid scheme had, besides, nearly been successful in restoring to Philip the important province of Flanders. For towards the end of 1583, the Prince of Chimay, eldest son of the Duke of Aerschot, was elected Governor of Flanders, he having affected a strong inclination for the Reformed religion, and having placed many members of that faith in important offices.

But no sooner was he installed as Governor, than he

began a correspondence with Parma conjointly with other confederates, one of whom was Imbize, the pretended foe to Papistry and to Imperial government. Matters went so far that negotiations with Parma were formally sanctioned by the government of Ghent, hostages exchanged, and a truce of three weeks agreed on; whilst the friends of the Union and of Liberty used all their efforts to save the province from making terms with the enemy. The Prince of Orange was unceasing in his endeavours to counteract the schemes of the Spanish party in Ghent, perceiving with horror that the loss of Flanders must make a united, independent, Netherland Union impossible.

In a letter full of wisdom he set before the authorities of Ghent the iniquity and the folly of their doings, though all the while he expressed himself with so much caution as to avoid giving offence. They wavered on receiving these remonstrances, and as they paused on the brink of the precipice, an incident occurred which brought the negotiations with Parma to a close. Imbize was discovered in a secret attempt to seize and deliver to Parma the city of Dendermonde.

The Commandant of the city (Ryhove), having received private information, was on his guard and arrested Imbize, who was soon after tried and executed, and the citizens of Ghent, thus warned, resolved to have no more dealings with Parma, but to stand by the Union, and their example was followed by the other Flemish cities, with the exception of Bruges, which being entirely in the power of the Prince of Chimay, surrendered to Parma.

Death of Anjou.—Early in the spring of 1584, negotiations between the States-General and the Duke of Anjou were resumed, but were soon ended by the death of Anjou on the 10th of June of that year. He had been ill during the whole time of the negotiations.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

VARIOUS ATTEMPTS ON THE LIFE OF THE PRINCE.—DELFT. —BIRTH OF FREDERICK OF NASSAU.

WITHIN the last two years five different attempts had been made upon the life of William of Orange, all of them instigated by the Spanish Government. In the summer of 1584, the Prince and his wife were living at Delft, a cheerful but quiet little place, traversed in all directions by canals, along the sides of which grew rows of lime and poplar trees. The streets were clean and airy, the houses well built, and the whole place thriving. Here the Prince's twelfth and last child had been born the previous winter, a son, who was afterwards the famous Stadtholder Frederic Henry. The Kings of Denmark and Navarre were the child's godfathers, and his baptism was celebrated with much rejoicing.

Francis Guion.—Balthazar Gérard.—One of the chief thoroughfares in Delft was called the Old Delft Street. It was shaded on both sides by lime trees, and here, opposite to a plain antique brick church, stood the house of William the Silent.

On Sunday morning, July the 8th, 1584, the Prince received by a special messenger the news of the death of Anjou, and summoned the man who had brought the news to his bed-chamber. The courier called himself Francis Guion; he had claimed and received the protection of the Prince in the early Spring on the ground

of being the son of a man who had suffered death as a Reformer, and as being himself warmly attached to the Protestant religion. He seemed a pious, psalm-singing young man, was very mean in appearance, short, lean, of muddy complexion, and about twenty-seven years of age. He had the habit of walking about with a Bible or hymn-book under his arm, and was sure to be found in church when service was going on. This personage it was who entered the Prince's room on the Sunday morning named above. Alas ! in reality this insignificant messenger had carried in his heart for seven years past a determination to murder the Prince.

Instead of being what he professed, his name was Balthazar Gérard, his father was still living in Burgundy, and far from being Protestants both were Papists, and this man Gérard a complete fanatic. When the Ban was published against Orange it revived all Gérard's desire of assassinating him, besides which he hoped for the reward.

Parma had long been looking about for a likely person to murder the Prince, and had spent many sums of money on people who presented themselves offering to do the deed, but who had hitherto spent the money and not accomplished the murder. Parma did not think much of Gérard, and though he promised the reward to his (Gérard's) relations if the man were taken in his attempt, he refused the fifty crowns demanded to provide for some necessary expenses which must be incurred in order to carry out the design. "I will then provide myself out of my own purse," said Gérard to Assonleville, Parma's confidential Councillor. "Go forth, my son," replied the Councillor, "and if you succeed, the King will fulfil all his promises, and you will gain an immortal name besides."

Balthazar Gérard did go forth, and came to Delft, where he presented himself to the clergyman of the town, who

was an intimate friend of the Prince. To the clergyman he showed some official seals, these having been stolen from Count Mansfield, Governor of Luxemburg. (Some time since Gérard had been a clerk to Count Mansfield's secretary, and thus had had an opportunity of taking models of the seals in wax, as he hoped to gain the confidence of the Prince's party by showing them the use of Count Mansfield's seals in forging passports for spies or others whom they might wish to send into Royalist territory.)

Through the Prince's recommendation, Gérard (who against his will had been sent to France to show the Mansfield seals to Maréchal Biron, whom it was believed would soon be Governor of Cambray), had been received into the suite of the Seigneur de Schoneval, then setting forth on a mission to the Duke of Anjou. While in France Gérard thought continually of his scheme, and on the death of Anjou besought permission to carry the important intelligence to the Prince. When unexpectedly summoned to the chamber of Orange, he was so overcome by his emotions that he could hardly reply to the questions asked of him. Here was an unlooked for opportunity to fulfil the idea which had haunted him for seven years ! The Prince was unarmed, and moreover in bed, and quite unprepared for any attack. But Gérard also was unarmed, and had no way of escape, and after communicating all the intelligence required, he was dismissed.

The bells were ringing for church as he left the Prince's house, and as he loitered about, a sergeant asked him why he did so. Gérard meekly answered that he wished to attend Divine worship, but that in his travel-stained dress he was unfit to go, without at least a new pair of shoes and stockings. The good-natured soldier spoke of the man's need to an officer, who told Orange, and the latter instantly sent him a sum of money to buy what he wanted. N~

morning, with the very money given him by the Prince, Gérard bought the pistols to murder his benefactor. The soldier who sold those pistols, when he heard to what use they had been put, stabbed himself in despair.

A Hero's Death.—On Tuesday, the 10th of July, 1584, the Prince and his wife, followed by the ladies and gentlemen of their household, were going to dinner about half-past twelve o'clock, when Gérard presented himself in a doorway and asked for a passport. The Princess of Orange, struck with the man's pale and agitated face, anxiously asked her husband who he was. The Prince carelessly answered that it was only a person who came for a passport, and at the same time he ordered a secretary to prepare one. But the Princess was still troubled, and remarked "that she had never seen so villanous a countenance." The Prince, however, gave no second thought to Gérard, and was as genial as usual at table, conversing a good deal about Friesland with the Burgomaster of Leewarden, the only guest present at the family dinner besides the members of the household.

At two o'clock the Prince rose from table and led the way to his private apartments above. He passed from the dining-room (which was on the ground floor) to a staircase leading to the rooms overhead. There was an archway sunk deeply into the wall on the left side of the vestibule which led to the staircase. The Prince began leisurely to ascend but had only reached the second stair when a man emerged from the shadow of the archway and discharged a pistol full at his heart. Three balls entered his body, one passing quite through, and hitting the opposite wall. The Prince exclaimed, "O my God, have mercy on my soul. O my God, have mercy upon this poor people!"

These were his last words, except that he faintly answered "Yes" to his sister, Catherine of Schwartzburg, when she asked him if he commended his soul to Jesus Christ.

The Prince's Master of the Horse had caught him in his arms, and placed him an instant on the stairs as he began to swoon, then he was laid on a couch in the dining-room, where in a few moments he breathed his last in the arms of his wife and sister.

The murderer escaped through a side door which led to a narrow lane, intending to gain the ramparts and spring into the moat; for he had provided himself with a couple of bladders to float himself across, but he stumbled over a heap of rubbish, fell, and was taken by several pages and halberdiers. William the Silent not being now alive to prevent it, the wretch was put to the most excruciating tortures, which he bore with extraordinary fortitude—and was finally executed with great barbarity four days afterwards, July the 14th. His father and mother received the reward of his great crime, being granted three of the murdered Prince's estates in Franche Comté. They were also ennobled.

Long after, when the eldest son of Orange returned from Spain, Philip offered him these very estates if he would continue to pay a fixed proportion of their rents to the family of his noble father's murderer. Spaniard though he had become, he rejected the proposal with scorn, so the estates remained in the Gérard family and the patent of nobility also, till Franche Comté was united to France, when a French Governor tore the documents in pieces and trampled them under his feet.

William of Orange left twelve children. His first wife, Anne of Egmont, had one son, Philip, (the son stolen away by Philip of Spain), and one daughter, Mary, who afterwards married Count Hohenlo. The Prince's second wife, Anna of Saxony, had one son, the celebrated Maurice of Nassau, and two daughters—Anna, who married her cousin, Count William Louis, and Emilie, who married

Prince Emanuel, the Pretender of Portugal. His third wife, Charlotte of Bourbon, had six daughters (whose names have been given already); and his fourth wife, Louisa de Coligny, one son, Frederic Henry, afterwards the Stadtholder of the Republic which his noble father had founded.

The Prince was fifty-one years and sixteen days old when he was murdered. He was buried, August the 3rd, at Delft, amidst the tears of a whole nation. Never was a deeper, more unaffected sorrow felt for the death of any human being.

The complete dress worn by the Prince on the day of his assassination is still preserved and shown at the Hague in the National Museum. He was attired, according to his usual custom, in very plain fashion. He wore a wide-brimmed, loosely-shaped hat of dark felt, with a silken cord round the crown, (such as the Beggars had once adopted),—a high ruff round his neck, a loose overcoat of grey frieze cloth over a tawny leather doublet, with wide slashed underclothes, and from his ruff depended one of the "Beggars'" medals, bearing the motto, "Fidèles au roy jusqu' à la besace" ("Faithful to the king even unto beggary.")

Ghent and Antwerp taken by Parma. The Freedom of the United Provinces secured.—So long as the Prince remained alive there was every hope of uniting the whole country, save only the two Walloon provinces. But now in the year following the great misfortune of his loss, Ghent and Antwerp fell before the scientific efforts of Parma, and their fall helped to complete the separation of the Netherlands. Yet the Prince had had the satisfaction of living to see civil and religious liberty established in the freed provinces, the enemy expelled from them, and their independence secured. The Republic existed in fact, from the moment of the Abjuration in 1581. The States which

William the Silent had liberated for ever from Spanish tyranny, grew into a flourishing and important Republic, under his sons and descendants as Stadtholders.

The enemies of the Prince have made many accusations against him; amongst others that of his being of a timid temperament, and *ambitious*. But let us remember that moderation does not constitute timidity, and that the mere presence of goodness stirs up the opposite evil to combat with it, and seek to destroy it. As to the charge of ambition, he had almost beggared himself and his family in his efforts to save his country from tyranny; and he had continually refused the supreme sovereignty over it. It had been within his easy grasp to secure *everything* for himself—but power, pomp, and wealth passed by him unheeded, having no weight to influence his noble soul. In truth he had lived and died not for himself, but for his country—"God pity this poor people!" were his dying words.

"Whether originally or not of a timid temperament, he was certainly possessed of perfect courage at last. In siege and battle—in the deadly air of pestilential cities—in the long exhaustion of body and mind which comes from unduly protracted labour and anxiety—amid the countless conspiracies of assassins,—he was daily exposed to death in every shape. Within two years, five different attempts against his life had been discovered. Rank and fortune were offered to any malefactor who would compass his murder. He had already been shot through the head, and almost mortally wounded. Under such circumstances even a brave man might have seen a pitfall at every step, a dagger in every hand, and poison in every cup. He on the contrary was ever cheerful, and hardly took more precaution than usual. 'God in His mercy,' said he with unaffected simplicity, 'will maintain my innocence and

my honour during my life and in future ages. As to my fortune and my life, I have dedicated both, long since, to His service.'

"William of Orange possessed, too, that which seemed the greatest good to the heathen philosopher—the sound mind in the sound body. His physical frame was found so perfect after death, that a long life might have been in store for him, notwithstanding all that he had endured. The desperate illness of 1574, the frightful gunshot wound inflicted by Jaureguy in 1582, had left no traces. The physicians pronounced that his body presented an aspect of perfect health."

"He went through life with a smiling face, bearing the load of a people's sorrows upon his shoulders. Their name was the last word upon his lips, save the simple affirmative with which the soldier who had been battling for the right all his lifetime, commended his soul in dying 'to his great Captain, Christ.' "As long as he lived he was the guiding-star of a whole brave nation, and when he died, the little children cried in the streets."

There is little need to add more concerning the character of William the Silent. His whole life and its varied action convey, far better than mere words, the grandeur and simplicity of his soul. An eminent and profound statesman, a great general, an accomplished gentleman, he was also the Father of his people, wise, tender, tranquil amid the thousand storms which assailed him; courageous, cheerful, and deeply religious.

The History of the Netherland Republic is inseparably connected with his life and death. "Father William" was dead, but Holland remained; the country still lived, and so did its implacable enemy, Philip.

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